ROLLE AND "OUR DAILY WORK"

C. HODGSON

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ROLLE AND "OUR DAILY WORK"

BY THE SAME WRITER.

In the Way of the Saints.
A Study in Illumination.
English Mystics.
Early English Devotions and Instructions.
The Sanity of Mysticism.
Richard Rolle's "Form of Perfect Living."
The Minor Works of Richard Rolle.
Richard Rolle's Version of the Penitential Psalms. Etc.

ROLLE AND "OUR DAILY WORK"

BY

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" Voyants dont l'âme était la mystique habitante,
Longtemps avant la mort, d'un monde extra-humain."
—(Emile Verhaeren.)

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FOREWORD.

Miss Hope Allen[1] has recently cast doubt on Rolle's authorship of *Our Daily Work,* which Dr. Horstman, in his two volumes of *Rolle's Works* accepted. She gave no conclusive reason or argument for rejecting the hitherto received opinion. It seems worth while, therefore, as there are, comparatively speaking, few manuals of the spiritual, mystical life designed for those " in the world," to suggest facts and possibilities which disincline some of us to accept yet any other authorship than Rolle's.

That readers may judge, I have prefixed a careful translation of the little tract as it appears in the Arundel MS., and as much of it as is contained in the Thornton MS; and these are printed opposite to each other on pp. 26—63, where the Thornton MS. breaks off. The numbers, within brackets, in these texts refer to the Notes which constitute chap. iii. These are intended, partly, to support the arguments in chap. iv., so placed as not to prove tiresome to readers using the book devotionally. The rendering is more scrupulously literal than that which in 1910 I included in my edition of *The Form of Perfect Living:* and I have corrected some mis-translations there. That book was intended for general readers, who possibly, eighteen years ago, were less familiar with English Fourteenth Century Mysticism than any of us can be now. At the same time, by adding here in every case, an English rendering for every quotation from a foreign source, I hope to have prevented the present book from being too academic or repellent for those whose main interest in Rolle and his immediate successors is devotional. Such readers can, if they like, leave the arguments and attend only to the text.

G.H.

All Souls, 1928.

[1] *Writings ascribed to Richard Rolle,* by Hope Emily Allen. 1928.

CHAPTER I.

A NOTE ON ASCETICISM AND MYSTICISM.

By those who consider him at all, Richard Rolle is thought of as a mystic. He is that; but more besides. Taking his life, so far as facts are known, and so far as conjectures are reasonable, from writings accepted as his, a student can hardly deny that he touched more and more various circumstances, embraced more topics and dealt more many-sidedly with religious theory than Hilton, the Lady Julian, or the still undetected author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. Widely contrasted extremes met in him. Though the process of his canonisation was not carried through, the claim made for him is not forgotten. Yet, no one could, few probably would wish to, deny some obvious, even glaring faults in his character, issuing at times in denunciations, well enough deserved no doubt in most cases, but past the border-line of Christian charity. It all remains on record in his Writings, his kindness and compassion, his severity and fiery wrath. His learning, however he obtained it, and that is a matter under investigation, did not prevent him from knowing how to put things within the reach of simple folk. A natural love of comfort is not wholly disguised by his sharp self-discipline. The list of contraries would not be difficult to expand beyond these, the most obvious. It all comes to this, that he was a singularly human person; he touched life everywhere: and, so, as experience has often shown, he was in fact made of the best stuff for the final forging of sanctity, for the refining of that eventual gold, which has to be plunged again and again into the dross-purging fires of daily life.

Having been so easily accepted as a mystic, he has not received due recognition as an ascetic.

It seems necessary to remind one's self often, and sometimes other people, that human creatures are what they are and do what they do, long before they reflect philosophically on the facts, and longer still before they frame and write down their theories and descriptions. Careful search will show that those most closely concerned did not, even in the fourteenth century, really confuse asceticism and mysticism. But, compared with our deluge of printed matter, they wrote few books; and they were more concerned possibly with winning souls than with spinning theories. But if they did not trouble much about philosophical classification and nomenclature, they lived probably in less mental confusion about all the deeper matters of the human sciences than most people do to-day. Lately, because the need for clarity of thought has become too acute to be overlooked or passed by, a few writers have taken pains to draw dividing lines; and among others, a line between mysticism and asceticism. Still, by the general reader, the distinction is apt to be disregarded. It is akin to the mistake on which Dr. Temple commented in *Christus Veritas,* when he rebuked some psychologists, William James in particular, for confining "the phrase 'religious experience' to moments of personal awareness of the presence of God." He added:

> "Mysticism is indeed the extreme development of religion pure and simple; but just because it is religion pure and simple, it is on one side unrepresentative of religion. For religion is not departmental; it takes life as a whole for its sphere; and 'religious experience' is not an affair of isolated moments, it is a whole experience of life and the world, permeated through and through with religion."[1]

This, of course, is no fault peculiar to mysticism; in no region can one side or aspect of religion be

[1] *Christus Veritas,* by William Temple, Bishop of Manchester. 1924. Part I. Ch. II. pp. 36, 37.

representative of the whole. Some may not accept Dr. Temple's description of mysticism: in any case, it lacks the precision which is so essential everywhere, and not least where mysticism is concerned. But it is pertinent here, because the point to be driven home is that in the recent re-discovery of and excitement about mysticism, lines of demarcation have been blurred too often, and far too unconsciously.

Fortunately, on this particular matter, a book has been recently written by Monsignor Farges, which in its English dress may do for us what the original was intended to do for the French. He argues that the neglect of this fundamental distinction has led to much misunderstanding, and that, in vital spiritual matters. He says:

> "Every impulse towards a perfect life or an ideal is imputed to mysticism; even more, all piety, every religious sentiment, is labelled mystic, so that the word is made to embrace every manifestation of Christian or even simply religious life. Yet nothing is more inexact."[2]

"Moral theology," he remarks, "became detached from dogmatics and casuistry towards the middle of the modern period, but it still embraced ascetic theology in its general scope. It was only towards the end of the seventeenth century that ascetic theology became a separate branch of moral theology, and that finally mystical theology came in time to be distinguished from ascetic."[3]

This last separation, Mgr. Farges, in a footnote, ascribes to "the genius of Bossuet." (1627—1704.)

Of course, this does not mean that the nature of any of these has been or could be changed: what happened was that men perceived that as the number of educated people increased, they could not always meet in one place to correct their errors, and clear their

[2] *Mystical Phenomena,* by Mgr. Farges. (English Translation, p.5.)
[3] *Op. cit.* pp. 3 and 4.

puzzles there on the spot by personal conversation. Books were multiplied as the necessary *media* of knowledge, and when things were thus to be written down, a consensus of meaning, agreement on contents and boundaries became more essential.

Precisely the same thing happened in physical science, and in the "moral" sciences. It is a platitude that Locke and Hume in England e.g., as also continental thinkers did, mixed up metaphysics, psychology and ethics. The nineteenth century, therefore, found itself obliged to stake out territories, and settle frontiers. Nevertheless, human life, like those who live it, is a synthesis: and so now attention is turning to the inter-connections between these carefully differentiated sciences. How, it is asked, can you discuss psychology apart from ethics or political science: how, although Ruskin was derided for suggesting it, can you have economics deprived of all ethical sanctions? Though life is a perpetual synthesis after analysis, and again analysis of that synthesis, that it may afterwards be re-synthesised better, still, limits are essential. Clear seeing is impossible in a hazy country. If psychology and ethics must merge for practical purposes and finally, it yet behoves the philosopher to know which is which.

It will hardly be urged that any gain can accrue from the confusion of mysticism with asceticism. Monsignor Farges, however, supplies no cut and dried definitions; nor is it very easy to present his conclusions shortly or mistake-proof. In his conclusion, "on the confusion of the two ways,"[4] at least twice, he uses such phrases as "the *active* or ascetic way, and the *passive* or mystical way,"[5] and again, "It will be seen *how dangerous* is it . . . . to confuse these two ways, ascetic and mystical, active and passive, by considering them as one and the same way in different stages of holiness, more or less advanced."[6]

[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 221—226.
[5] *Op. cit.* p. 221.
[6] *Op. cit.* p. 222.

A heedless reader, remembering the usual distinction drawn between the active way of life and the "religious," may easily be misled by such phrases. But quite early, though not in a convenient, set definition, Mgr. Farges has shown what he means by *active* and *passive* in this connection. On pages four and five, he deliberately rejects "the common distinction" that asceticism is the "ordinary way" of perfection, and mysticism the "extraordinary"; not because "this common distinction is false, but the terms *ordinary* and *extra*ordinary appear to us too vague."[7]

The distinction, as he sees it, is this:

> "The names *ascetic* and *mystic* are well chosen . . . the first (ἀσκείν) expresses the effort of the soul which exerts itself towards the perfect life. The second (μυστήριον) denotes the mysterious influence which at times operates in us, yet without us."[8] [9]

This passage most nearly approaches a definition, so far as he gives one. But he has led up to it by earlier, more elaborated statements, e.g.:

> "The one is *active* and calls for our own efforts at all costs; the other *passive,* under the hand of God, in a very short moment, and calls only for our consent. The former is the ordinary and longer road, the other a 'short cut.' In the one, we walk on foot: in the other God bears us on the wings of His grace, without any merits of our own, other than our readiness to be led."[10]

The words "calls for our own efforts at all costs," bring in the element of self-stripping, self-discipline, endurance of pain and privation, all involved in the idea of asceticism. One more passage must suffice:

> "If the soul follows the ordinary ways of

[7] *Op. cit.* p. 5.
[8] Translation obscures the statement: "without us" is not spatial: it means without our effort.
[9] *Op. cit.* p. 9.
[10] *Op. cit.* p. 6.

> Providence, it remains always *active* and master of itself, without any suspension of its powers: on the other hand, in the extraordinary ways, it becomes at certain moments *passive,* in the hands of the Holy Spirit, Who takes possession of it, suspends its powers more or less, and acts in it and through it."[11]

There is, it will now be seen, no confusion between asceticism and mysticism, between the active and 'religious' lives. Asceticism and mysticism, as Mgr. Farges expounds them, go on, if one may put it so, side by side. Indeed, asceticism, active effort, is essential to what he calls "the classical idea of the three ways," namely, to *purgation,* without which neither *illumination* nor *union* can be possible.

The distinction and connection is clearly put by S. Teresa in a letter to Fr. Rodrigo Alvarez, dated February, 1576:

> "I call supernatural (or mystical) that which no skill or effort of ours, however much we labour, can attain to, though we should prepare ourselves for it, and that preparation must be of great service."

Mgr. Farges quotes this letter, which does not appear in the Saint's *Letters,* as translated by the Benedictines of Stanbrook.

This view is constant, for mysticism does not change with the passage of time, whatever mistakes this or that writer may make. Walter Hilton, in the later years of the fourteenth century, wrote in the same vein as S. Teresa in the sixteenth:

> "This third part" (may be called) "burning love in contemplation. . . . . Nor may any man living in deadly flesh have it continually in its fulness, and in the overpassing, save at times when he is visited. . . . . And all this is wrought of the spirit of our Lord in a man's soul, as Saint Paul saith. This part of contemplation God giveth

[11] *Op. cit.* p. 7.

where He will, to learned and to lewd, to men and to women, to those occupied in prelacy, and to solitary also."[12]

Perhaps it may be put in yet another way, for simplicity's sake: every mystic must be ascetic, but not every ascetic is a mystic.

Rolle, then, is not singular in his asceticism; but so much emphasis has been laid on his mysticism that the other side seems to have fallen somewhat out of sight. Everyone who knows anything of him remembers the notable chapter fifteen in the *Incendium Amoris,* where he describes his first mystical experience—properly so-called—in the unlocated Chapel.

But whenever it took place, and the date of it is under discussion, Rolle's adoption of a hermit's life was a previous and a definitely ascetical step. If Dom Noetinger succeeds in proving that it occurred some considerable time after his nineteenth year, after visits to and residences at the Sorbonne, the sacrifice is enhanced. Resting on the *Legenda,* the assumption has been that he became a hermit very soon after his sudden farewell to Oxford, dated, in the *Office,* as having happened in his nineteenth year. The precise words are:

> " Demum, decimo nono vite sue anno, considerans tempus vite mortalis incertum et terminum tremebundum . . . proinde de Oxoniâ redisse ad domum paternam. Una dierum allocutus est sororem suam quae ipsum tenerâ affectione dilexit: ' Soror,' inquit, ' michi dilecta, duas habes tunicas, unam albam, alteram gresiam, quas auide concupisco.' "
>
> (" At length, in his nineteenth year, considering that the time of life is uncertain, and its end greatly to be dreaded . . . . . therefore, having returned from Oxford to the paternal home, one day he said to his sister, who loved him with tender affection: ' Sister,' he said, ' to me beloved,

[12] *The Scale of Perfection,* Bk. I. Ch. IX.

thou hast two tunics, one white, the other gray, which I greatly covet.'")

Though this document, drawn up by contemporaries who probably knew him well, does not absolutely fix the date, it has been generally assumed that his request for the two tunics, that "he might present a certain likeness to a hermit," followed quickly on his departure from Oxford. But, within the last two or three years, Dom Noetinger has drawn attention to a number of MSS. in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal de Paris, which belonged originally to the Sorbonne.[13] In these, references occur to the presence of Richard Rolle at the Sorbonne at times between 1320 and 1326. These MSS. (numbered 1020—1022) are not the originals, but appear to be copies made during the eighteenth century. Thus the proof is not complete: yet Dom Noetinger justifiably pleads that "in the seventeenth or eighteenth century France and the Sorbonne had nothing particularly to gain by claiming R. Rolle, who was almost completely unknown."

He is working on these documents, and if he can prove that Rolle was, even if only at intervals, a student at the Sorbonne for some years, and that, therefore, he became a hermit not at 19, but somewhere about 26, many hitherto unexplained difficulties in his life will vanish; specially not a few instances of attention and regard, rather unusually, as it has seemed, paid to a mere youth. But all that will not affect the present point, that, whenever it occurred, Rolle's adoption of hermit-life was a definitely ascetic step.

The *Legenda*, accompanying the *Officium* (prepared to facilitate Rolle's canonisation), were, so the tradition runs, composed by the nuns of Hampole. They tell the now well known story of his escape from what Thomas à Kempis calls "the captivity of things";[14] his casting aside, with impetuous vehemence, as

[13] *The Month*, Jan., 1926, p. 28.
[14] *Imitatio Christi*, III. 27.

absolute as that of S. Francis, of all comfort and security: his going forth stripped of the material means of life, in a sort of habit, compounded of those clothes borrowed from his sister and father. It was not, presumably, the purpose of the *Legenda* to dwell on the ascetic side of his life, and, in fact, it is not emphasised. Even the finality of his choice is not stressed; the words are:

> "Post accepcionem igitur habitûs heremite, et relictionem parentum." (*Officium*, Lectio II.)
>
> ("After having put on the habit of a hermit, he left his parents.")

Though this *Officium* and the *Legenda* have been regarded as a main source of our small knowledge of his life's events, two of his own Writings,—which Miss Allen admits into the Canon—viz., the *Melum Contemplativorum* and the *Incendium Amoris*, give auto-biographical facts and hints. In the beautiful apostrophe, in the latter, to Eternal Beauty, Richard, in words written long enough after to combine the ascetic's original impulse with the mystic's later-born experience, refers to the lasting cost of that sudden and complete sacrifice:

> "Veni in me dilecta mea! Quecunque habui pro te dedi, sed et habenda respui, ut mansionem habeas in anima mea."
>
> (The *Incendium*, edited by Margaret Deanesly, p. 152.)
>
> ("Come to me, my beloved One! All that I had I gave for Thee; all that I should have for Thee I forsook, that Thou mightest have in my soul a mansion.")

Here we find, in the first half of the fourteenth century the very image which, in the sixteenth, S. John of the Cross will use, in a passage which may properly be quoted here, as it fills out Rolle's thought:

> "We must keep in mind that God dwells in a secret and hidden way in all souls, in their very

substance, for if He did not, they could not exist at all. This dwelling of God is very different in different souls: in some, He dwells alone, in others not; in some He dwells contented, in others displeased; in some as in His own house giving His orders and ruling it; in others as a stranger in a house not His own, where He is not permitted to command, nor to do anything at all. Where personal desires and self-will least abound, there is He most alone, most contented, there He dwells as in His own house, ruling and directing it, and the more secretly He dwells, the more He is alone.

"So then in that soul wherein no desire dwells, and out of which all images and forms of created things have been cast, the Beloved dwells most secretly Himself, and the purer the soul and the greater its estrangement from everything but God, the more intimate His converse and the closer His embrace."

(*The Living Flame*, Stanza IV. 15.)

Rolle wrote the *Incendium* some years after his embarkation on the life of a hermit; how many cannot be even approximately determined, till we know whether or no the Sorbonne period intervened between his Oxford and his hermit days.

No reason for the suddenness of his resolution is known save that given in the *Officium:*

"Demum, decimo nono vite sue anno, considerans tempus vite mortalis incertum et terminum tremebundum, maximè hiis qui vel carnis lasciuiis, vel solum laborant perquerendis diuitiis, et pro hiis student dolis atque fallaciis, (fallentes tamen maximè semet ipsos,) cogitauit, Deo inspirante, providè de seipso memorans sua nouissima, ne peccatorum laqueis caparetur, proinde de Oxoniâ redisse ad domum paternam."

(*Officium*, Lectio prima.)

(" At last, in the nineteenth year of his age, reflecting that the time of mortal life is uncertain, and its end alarming, specially to those who either idle in pleasures of the flesh or only labour to heap up riches, and for these (ends) apply themselves to frauds and deceptions, (mostly deceiving themselves however), he thought, God inspiring him (and) remembering prudently his own last end, not to let himself be taken in the snares of sinners; therefore returned from Oxford to the paternal home.")

From this it would seem that vivid yet sober fear, lively prudence drove him to *ascesis;* though some critics have found this motive insufficient. Yet, what more likely? Rolle possessed imagination. That much his Writings show. He was rather more than normally sensitive to pain, specially of heart and mind: he was *anima naturaliter christiana,*[15] and his upbringing had strengthened his natural dispositions. Asceticism was the most apt and likely path, if once he turned from youth's daily ways and pleasures.

But before he wrote the *Incendium,* mystical experience came to him. Then and thereafter, very possibly, to him that experience might seem to be his real, his deepest motive: after the time in the Chapel, he may have realised that underneath the impulsive abandonment, was something driving him to that union, which, long after, S. John of the Cross would describe imperishably. Yet, even so, something of asceticism remained: the " cost " was still, and always must be, patent, in his cry—" All that I had I gave for Thee. . . . All that I should have for Thee I forsook."

Again, his reference to the impossibility of serving God and Mammon has an unmistakably ascetic ring:

" Dileccio namque mundi et Dei nunquam simul in eodem animo existunt; sed cuius amor forcior est reliquum expellit, ut manifeste appareat quis sit mundi amator et quis Christi amator. Erumpit

[15] A soul naturally Christian.

enim in ostencione operis feruor amoris. Siquidem sicut se habent amatores Christi erga mundum et carnem, sic amatores mundi se habent erga Deum et animum suum." (*Inc. Amor.* cap. I.)

("Truly, love of God and of this world never may be together in one soul; but whichever love is stronger puts the tother out; that openly thus may be known who is this world's lover and who is Christ's lover. Certainly, as Christ's lovers behave themselves against the world and the flesh, so lovers of the world behave themselves against God and their own soul.")

Apparently, mortals were as perverse and foolishly argumentative then as now, for Richard adds what no one should need to be told at any time:

"Electi quippe comedunt et bibunt et tota cogitacione semper ad Deum intendunt, in omnibus uisibilibus non uoluptatem sed necessitatem tamen querunt, cum anguscia de terrenis loquuntur et non nisi transeundo, non moram faciendo in eis." (*Inc. Amor.* Cap. I.)

("They truly that are chosen eat and drink: but ever to God with all their minds they take intent, and in all earthly things, not lust but need only they seek. Of earthly things they speak with anguish, and only in passing: nor in them making no tarrying.")

These closing words would seem to indicate an extreme of asceticism in Rolle, which differentiates him, rather markedly, though not much notice has been taken of the fact, from the main stream of Catholic Mysticism. The Manichæan heresy seems never far away from mortal man. Rolle's natural intensity of temperament might easily combine with his difficult circumstances to bring him, by a kind of reaction, very close to the doctrine of the inherent evil in matter. Yet, before him, S. Bonaventure, after him, Bellarmine, together with many other saints and mystics, had seen, and still do see, how the good things of God's world

can be rightly used: the joy of S. Francis in the natural world is familiar to those who may know little of other saints. The first two set them up as a "ladder" to God, recognising them as His chosen instruments. Bellarmine, notably, insisted on a balanced use of God's whole creation, which he firmly declined to narrow down, or call unspiritual in any part:

> "If the body without doubt require refection and rest, with how much more reason doth the soul require her meat and sleep, and it is not possible for her amidst the encumbrances of so many important affairs without this provision, to fulfil her offices rightly. But the meat of the soul is prayer, and her sleep is contemplation, by the which ladders are framed in the heart, that the God of gods may be seen in Sion."[16]

Thus far, Rolle, or any other spiritual writer, would agree. But by that sub-title, Bellarmine did not mean just nothing at all: it indicated his line of argument, as the succeeding paragraphs to the words quoted above show:

> "But we mortal men as it seemeth can find no other ladders whereby to ascend unto God than the works of God: for those who by the singular gift of God have by another way become admitted into Paradise to hear God's secrets, which it is not lawful for man to utter, are not said to have ascended, but to have been rapt, and this Saint Paul plainly confesses of himself when he says, 'I was caught up into Paradise and heard many unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter.' And that a man may by the works of God, that is by creatures, ascend unto the knowledge and love of the Creator, the book of Wisdom" (Chap. XIII.) "doth teach, and the Apostle

[16] *The Mind's Ascent to God*, by a Ladder of Created Things, by Blessed Robert Bellarmine, Cardinal. Done into English from the Latin by Monialis. p. 4.

to the Romans :[17] and reason itself doth sufficiently confirm it, since the efficient cause may be known by the effects, and the pattern by the image : and there can be no doubt that all creatures are the works of God, and that man and the angels are not only His works, but also His images, as the Scriptures teach us. I therefore, moved by these reasons, and having some small degree of leisure from public affairs, and admonished by the example of S. Bonaventure, who in a like time of leisure wrote a book entitled *The Pilgrimage of the Mind to God,* have essayed from the contemplation of creatures to make a ladder by which we may in some sort ascend to God."[18]

That Bellarmine meant just what he said, a reference to the thirteenth chapter of the Book of Wisdom will show. Here are the important passages :

"1. Vani autem sunt omnes homines in quibus non subest scientia Dei, et de his quae videntur bona, non potuerunt intelligere eum qui est, neque operibus attendentes agnoverunt quis esset artifex.

"2. Sed aut ignem, aut spiritum, aut citatum aerem, aut gyrum stellarum, ait nimiam aquam, aut solem aut lunam, rectores orbis terrarum deos putaverunt.

"3. Quorum si specie delectati, deos putaverunt, sciant quanto his dominator eorum speciosior est ; speciei enim generator haec omnia constituit.

"5. A magnitudine enim speciei et creaturae cognoscibiliter poterit creator horum videri."

(Vulg.)

("1. Surely vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things that are seen, know Him that is : neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the work-master.

[17] Rom. i. 19. It seems necessary to add v. 20, to get the full sense.

[18] *Op. cit.* pp. 4 and 5.

"2. But deemed either fire, or wind, or the swift air, or the circle of the stars, or the violent water, or the lights of heaven, to be the gods which govern the world.

"3. With whose beauty if they being delighted took them to be gods; let them know how much better the Lord of them is: for the first author of beauty hath created them.

"5. For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the maker of them is seen.") (Wisdom, A.V.)

S. Paul's words, in the Epistle to the Romans, are too well known to need quotation. This is not so with S. Bonaventure. The following passages, from his *Itinerarii Mentis in Deum* show that his attitude was rightly described by Bellarmine:

"Aperi igitur oculos, aures spirituales admove, labia tua solve et cor tuum appone, ut in omnibus creaturis Deum tuum videas, audias, laudes, diligas et colas, magnifices et honores ne forte totus contra te orbis terrarum consurgat."[19]

("Open therefore thine eyes, apply thy spiritual ears, open thy lips and apply thine heart that thou mayest see, hear, praise, love and worship, magnify and honour God in all creatures, even if the whole world rose against thee.")

In the next chapter, he writes expressly about the five senses, as channels of this knowledge of material things:

"Notandum igitur quod iste mundus qui dicitur macrocosmus, intrat ad animam nostram, quae dicitur *minor mundus,* per portas quinque sensuum."

("It is to be noted therefore that this world, which is called a macrocosm, enters our intelligence, which is called the *lesser world,* by the doorways of the five senses.")

Further on he writes:

[19] *Itin. Mentis.* Cap. 1. § 15.

"Nam per *visum* entrant corpora sublimia et luminosa et cetera colorata, per *tactum* vero corpora solida et terrestria, per tres vero *sensus intermedios* intrant intermedia, ut per *gustum* aquea, per *auditum* aërea, per *odoratum* vaporabilia, quae aliquid habent de natura humida, aliquid de aërea, aliquid de ignea seu calida, sicut patet in fumo ex aromatibus resoluto."

("For by *sight* enter sublime, illuminated and variously coloured bodies: by *touch* indeed solid and terrestrial bodies; by three intermediate senses indeed enter intermediate things, as liquids by *taste,* aerial things by *hearing,* vapours by *smell,* which naturally possess some element of humidity, air, fire or heat, as is obvious in the breath released by aromatic things.")

In the first chapter, S. Bonaventure uses the very term ladder, which Cardinal Bellarmine took from him:

"Cum enim secundum statum conditionis nostrae ipsa rerum universitas sit scala ad ascendendum in Deum."

("For according to our condition and circumstances the universe of things may be a ladder of ascent to God.")

Rolle's *Form of Perfect Living* shows traces of acquaintance with S. Bonaventure's *De Triplici Via:* but he does not seem to have followed his teaching in the *Itinerarium,* on natural things; which is perhaps the more singular, because Rolle was "English" to his backbone, and there is no more characteristically racial element in our literature, all through, than our love for nature, leading not seldom to the recognition of the God of Nature.

If we were certain that *Our Daily Work* was Rolle's, it would not be necessary to go beyond that to find his warnings against the five senses, his deep distrust of them. However, the first chapter of the *Incendium*

repeats, and more than once, his exhortation to leave all earthly things:

> "It behoves truly to be turned to Him, and from all earthly things[20] to be altogether turned in mind, before he may be expert in the sweetness of God's love, even in little things. . . . . Most is God to be loved: mickle are heavenly things to be loved: little or nought but for need, are earthly things[21] to be loved."

These last lines contain the utmost concession Rolle will make to these material things which we know through the help of the five senses: "nought but for need." It is whole worlds away from S. Bonaventure's ladder of the universe of things on which we may ascend to God.

It was not only S. Bonaventure whom Rolle passed by in this matter, but Hugh of S. Victor too, who on this question of the possible ascent to God by created things, is equally emphatic, in the *De Arrha Animae (The Pledge of the Soul);* always, of course, with the proviso as to the right use of them:

> "'Look,' he says to his soul, 'upon the Universe, see if it contains anything which may not be useful to you. The whole of Nature in its course, has no other purpose than to put itself wholly at your service, to care for your interest, to spread itself with boundless prodigality before your longings and needs. Such is the perpetual function of heaven and earth and sky, of the oceans and all they contain. Such is the function of the circuit of the seasons, which, by yearly renewal, by re-births like resurrection, refreshes all that has grown old, recreates what has perished, restores what has withered, procures for you per-

[20] The Latin is *ab omnibus rebus visibilibus.* Misyn writes "all erthly thingis."

[21] *The Fire of Love,* Ch. I. Done into modern English by Frances Comper. The Latin is *omnia terrena:* Misyn writes "erthly thinges."

petual means of support. Who, then, do you think, created this order of things? Who ordained that Nature should with one consent serve you? You accept the gift; the Giver you overlook. . . . . He who could give so much deserves your love; He who desired so to give loves you profoundly. . . . . Behold, then, imprudent and temerarious soul, see what you are doing, when you propose to love and be loved by this world. . . . At least, if you love these creatures, love them as inferior things, love them as hangers-on; love them as gifts, as a pledge from your Lover, as the presents of a friend, as the bounty of a great Lord. But never let these affections destroy the remembrance of all you owe Him. Love these creatures, not instead of Him, nor them with Him, but them for His sake, and Him through them, Him above all. . . . . Love Him for their sake; love thyself for His, love His gifts because they come from Him to you, for your sake. That is pure, chaste love, love without a stain, bitterness or gloom, love of limpid loveliness, enchanting sweetness, everlasting stability.'"

If we pass over some centuries, we come to that great exponent of the mystical, ascetical, spiritual life, S. Teresa, than whom, no one has ever stripped him or her self more whole-heartedly. Yet, she allowed herself to love Nature. Thus, in *The Interior Castle,* she asks her sisters:

> "How if we knew the properties of all things? It is most profitable to ponder over the grandness of creation, and to exult in being the brides of such a wise and mighty King."[22]

In the *Autobiography,* too, she remarked that the natural world was a help to her against tiresome thoughts:

> "Another help to me was the sight of fields, water, flowers: those things lifted me up to the

[22] *The Interior Castle,* V. II. 2.

Creator, they carried me to a holy recollectedness, and served instead of a book."[23]

It may be urged that S. Teresa's experience in sixteenth century Spain differed widely from Rolle's in the fourteenth century North Riding of Yorkshire. But there is nothing in such an argument when the question is of the course of Nature :—sunrise and sunset, harvest lands, singing rivers, the lush abundance of summer. All these, in one form or another, occur everywhere, nor do they differ materially in different times. And after all, Rolle was not the only English Mystic of the fourteenth century, though he was the earliest. Walter Hilton's temperament may have been less intense than Rolle's, but, in his sober way, he knew how to estimate and use God's gifts. No doubt, in comparing the two, we should remember that Rolle was a pioneer, and had to grapple with the difficulties which always beset and hamper the clearer of a new road. And then it would seem as if Hilton, having seen here and there some result of Rolle's fiery teachings, occasionally criticised them. An instance may be found concerning " Song, Sweetness and Heat," in Book II., chapter 30, of the *Scala.* Again and again in this beautiful Treatise the reader may note the more even poise of Hilton's teaching. Without lacking fervour it is conspicuous for balance. He does, indeed, " umbethink " himself : in every puzzle and difficulty, he weighs conflicting factors. And so, in the midst of caring for " earthly things," he says :

> " To love and to have more than thou needest skil-fully (reasonably) but only for lust and liking it is a great default. . . . For S. Austin saith to our Lord thus, ' Lord, he loveth Thee but little that loveth anything with Thee that he loveth not for Thee.' "

If Hilton can hardly be called an enthusiast for Nature, at least his reminder of S. Augustine does not preclude a degree—if a lower one—of S. Teresa's

[23] The *Autobiography,* Ch. IX.

attitude when she asked the question already quoted. But, when all is said and done, our fourteenth century mystics show little of the indigenous English love of Nature, which had lasted on from the thirteenth; as fresh carolling "secular" lyrics prove: e.g., *The Cuckoo Song, The Owl and the Nightingale, Lenten ys come with love to Toune,* and many a picture and hint in Chaucer. Nor do we find it only in Song. Walter Hilton died at the Priory of S. Peter, Thurgarton, Notts, in 1396; roughly 100 years after the building and carving of Southwell Minster's Chapter House. Southwell is but a few miles from Thurgarton. About 1340, in Hilton's boyhood then, the Choir Screen was built and sculptured; and among the multitude of faces and figures is that wonderful cowled head and hand, of some unknown man, carrying a cross. It is too early to be Hilton himself, but it may have served him as an inspiration. Whether or no he frequented the Chapter House, the unique sculpture there remains as a proof that Nature's beauty did not go unloved in mediæval England. Many a time must that anonymous artist-mason have brought from Sherwood Forest the oak and the ivy, the vine and the wild rue, the sycamore and the beam-tree, the dock and mullein, the bryony and cinque-foil, with many a memory of bird and beast which he wrought in the hard Mansfield stone, which took such sharp, deep cutting. There, on the capitals of Vestibule and Chapter House, it remains in a loveliness not to be matched elsewhere; lasting witness of the English love of the most homely natural things. It surely must have been the ascetic element in his nature which made Rolle disregard the sane yet loving pleas for the right and due use of created things, which he could have found and surely did know in S. Bonaventure and the Victorines. Nothing was wanting in his surroundings. Wordsworth, in unforgotten words, has described the result of Nature on Youth, if Age, later on, forgets or turns aside:

> " feeling has to him imparted power
> That through the growing faculties of sense
> Doth like an agent of the one great Mind
> Create, creator and receiver both,
> Working but in alliance with the works
> Which it beholds.—Such verily is the first
> Poetic spirit of our human life,
> By uniform control of after years,
> In most, abated or suppressed: in some
> Through every change of growth and of decay
> Pre-eminent till death."[24]

Beautiful as Wordsworth's Cumberland was, it could hardly surpass the North Riding moors, dales and streams. Nor was Rolle, who never came to the chill of age, a man to be dulled by life's conventions. He knew the very heart of the moorlands: the sharply outlined Clevelands, snow-clad in winter; the grim Hambletons, curving at moments into softness, and shimmering with opalescent hues. He knew the purpling slopes, the luxuriant greenness of the inter-scattered dales: wild, lovely life was strewn before his eyes for how many years. And the visible trace of it all on his writings is incredibly small, as, apparently, was its immediate effect on him. Here and there, a fugitive glimpse of the countryman's love and observation may be found in his translated Psalter. That suggests perhaps that the absence of it elsewhere is rather due to severity than unawareness. Not seldom, he seems to pass by deliberately the most inviting chances. There is, e.g., the well known verse in Ps. lxxxiii. (Vulg.):

> " Etenim passer invenit sibi domum; et turtur nidum vbi reponat pullos suos."[25]

In his Commentary, the pert, happy sparrow of our love, becomes " a meek will," and the turtle dove " chaste flesh sorrowing for sin." Yet the Psalmist's picture does not at any rate preclude thankfulness and joy over the safety provided by " the living God," for

[24] *The Prelude,* Book II. ll. 255—265.

[25] (" For the sparrow hath found herself a house, and the turtle a nest for herself where she may lay her young ones.")

those creatures, who, if they are small and common, do not fall to the ground without His knowing.

More surprisingly still, Rolle misses the opportunity held out to him by Psalm xxviii.; most notably in the splendid phrase:

"et in templo eius omnes dicent gloriam."[26]

This, in the Commentary, rather tamely becomes "all that is in His Temple shall say joy of God, and praise Him in His Holy Church and in Heaven." But here, he was following S. Augustine, who, despite many passages in the *Confessions* about natural beauty, does not expound them in this passage. In the *Incendium,* Rolle just mentions the Nightingale:

> "In the beginning truly of my conversion and singular purpose, I thought I would be like the little bird that for love of the Beloved longs, but in longing, it is gladdened when He comes that it loves." (Chap. 42.)

Perhaps Miss Allen is right, when she suggests that here, and also in *The Form of Perfect Living,* Rolle is writing in current literary fashion, a thing he seldom indulged in. Nightingales are not very common in the Midlands, still less in the North: and no one could suppose from what he says that he knew much about them at first hand.

If for ascetic reasons he passed natural joy by, undoubtedly for those he renounced ordinary comfort. This he seems to have cut down to the narrowest limits on which life and activity could be sustained. Thus, he will forgo sleep:

> "Moreover, and sleep gainstands me as an enemy: for no time heavies me to lose but that in which I, constrained, yield to sleeping."[27]

If *Our Daily Work* is his, his stringent directions about food (pp. 82, 83, 85, 94) must not be overlooked. Yet even here we must beware of exaggeration. His exhortation is "With mourning, soberness and measure

[26] ("and in His temple all shall speak His glory.")
[27] *Incendium Amoris,* Prologue.

shalt thou wend to thy meat." Undoubtedly, his subsequent sympathetic list of "holy men," who ate coarse food, sometimes mingling it with ashes, that it might be still less pleasing, does colour his commands with increased severity. Perhaps, for the moment, he forgot he was writing for those in the world. More probably, he remembered Gargantuan feasts in some of the "great houses" in Yorkshire, which, along with the ale-houses and the homesteads, he sometimes visited in his quest for souls to be rescued. We may have few precise records of such junketings, but in later treatises, like John Russell's *Boke of Nurture, Folowyng Englondis gise,* which belongs to the earlier part of the next century, we have glimpses of truly terrific feasts. And England's guise has ever run to celebrating everything possible with a dinner.

One human pleasure, Rolle not only allowed, but enjoined as a duty, as well as, or rather because it is, a real need,—holy friendship.

There are always those who are ready to condemn asceticism as waste of opportunity, so long, that is, as it touches spiritual life: for people, if they do not applaud, at least tolerate, the athlete's self-denial, or the discipline of those who

"scorn delights and live laborious days"

for some mundane purpose. It is not perceived that the religious ascetic strips himself that he may be clothed upon: that the purging of the natural self must precede a richer, more absolute, ultimate fulness: that the "dark night" S. John of the Cross tells of, is but the drear space before the dawn. On this difficult matter, a letter of Baron von Hügel to Fr. George Tyrrell, dated Sept. 26th, 1898,[28] and Fr. Tyrrell's reply of Sept. 28th, 1898, throw some light. The pertinent part of the Baron's letter is reprinted, with the answer, in *George Tyrrell's Letters,* pp. 40—47.

But Rolle, like every other great teacher, must, in the long run, be judged mainly by his own character,

[28] *Selected Letters of Baron F. von Hügel,* pp. 71 et seq.

temperament and circumstances, as these were developed, stunted or accentuated by his age and its spirit. No one can doubt that his natural bent favoured extreme severity to the natural man; moreover, he lived when the religious life in England was beginning to be invaded by luxury, relaxation of Rule, and self-indulgence.

To some it may seem that Hilton insists more than Rolle on the purification of the soul: the subject absorbs the larger part of the first Book of the *Scala*. Dom Noetinger, in his Introduction, dwells at length on this aspect of Hilton,[29] who treats in an ordered manner the work of mortification for purification. In general, Hilton's methods are more learned and systematic than Rolle's, a natural consequence of disposition, education and rôle in life. It is a question of method rather than of substance: and it is easy to overstate the divergence. In any case it is a mistake to regard Rolle solely as a mystic, and to overlook his asceticism, to forget, as Dr. Temple reminds us not to do, that "religious experience" is a "whole experience of life and the world."

[29] This Introduction, translated into English, is prefixed to *The Scale of Perfection*, in Messrs. Burnes and Oates' *Orchard Series:* pp. xxiv.—xxix. deal specially with the point.

While my book was in the press, Dom Noetinger's new volume, *Le Feu de l'Amour*, etc., appeared. In his *Introduction* here, he challenges several traditional theories. In particular, he shows that the *Officium* cannot have been composed by the Cistercian nuns of Hampole. (See above, p. 8.) He suggests (pp. xi. xii.) the Brigittines of Syon Monastery.

"OUR DAILY WORK"

TRANSLATED FROM THE

ARUNDEL AND THORNTON MSS.

CHAPTER II.

OUR DAILY WORK *(a mirror of discipline).*

ARUNDEL MS.

Three things are needful to each man, to mickle his meed, through God's grace helping, Who shall him lead. The first, that man be in honest work, without losing his time. The second that he do his work with a freedom of spirit, in place, and in time, as to each (man) work falls. The third, that his outer bearing, wheresoever he come, be so honest and fair, that praise be to God, and stirring of good to all that see him, as the Apostle bids: *Omnia in vobis honeste & secundum ordinem fiant:* that is, "What ye do, honestly and in order be it done."

First part of the Book.

At the first, man shall make sure that he lose not his short time, nor in idleness let it overpass. God has lent man this time to serve God in, and with good works to gather grace, to buy heaven with. (4) Not only this short time flies from us, but also our age, as the wise man says: *Nostra etas volat* (Our age flies away): and S. Gregory says: "Our life is like a man in a ship; sit he, stand he, sleep he, wake he; ever he is thitherwards where the ship drives with strength of the weather. So we, in this short time, whatso we do, we drive ever to our end." And our enemy, Death, follows us aye at the back; with a sharp spear to stick

CHAPTER II.

OUR DAILY WORK *(a mirror of discipline).*

THORNTON MS.

Three things are needful to each man of what state he be,(1) to mickle his meed, through God's grace helping, as above is said,(2) Who him shall lead. The first is that man be in honest work without hindering of his time. The second that he do his work with a freedom of spirit, in place and time, as to each work falls. The third that his outer bearing, whereso he come, so honest be and fair, that praise be to God, and stirring of good to all that see him: that the Apostle's bidding they fulfil in deed, that says: *Omnia in vobis honeste & secundum ordinem fiant;* "All that ye do, honestly be it done, (and) in order."

At the first, shall every-each good Christian man look about (3) him, and ever be ware that he lose not the short time, nor wrongly spend it, nor in idleness let it overpass, the time that God has lent him to serve Him withal, to gather, in good works, treasure of grace, to buy Him with heaven. The time of work is short, and therefore the faster it is to work, that we lose not this short time, and so lose our meed.(5) And not only this, short time from us flies, as the wise man says, *Nostra etas volat,* that is to say, "our age flies." Sleep we, wake we, and whatso else we do, our life glides away: and, as S. Gregory says: "Our life is like a man in a ship; sit he or stand, sleep he or wake he, ever he is thitherward whither the ship drives, through the strength of the wind. Right so, we, in this short while, whatso we do, we drive ever to our end. Therefore, we speed us in this short while; as our enemy follows us ever at the back with a sharp sword to stick

us through: therefore says Seneca: *Vita fugit, mors sequitur* (Life flies, death follows). And S. Austin says: *Nichil aliud est vita: quem velox currens ad mortem.* (Life is nought else but a swift running to death.) Therefore, (it) is nought to tell by, how long man lives, but how well. Yet, this short life is uncertain; how long it shall last: therefore says Job: *Nescio quam diu subsistam: & si post modicum tollat me factor meus.* (I know not how long I shall last, and if after a short while my Maker will bear me away.) And S. Gregory says: "I wot not the time I shall dwell, nor when I shall be taken hence and led to the doom." And S. Jerome says: "nothing so much beguiles,(6) as that he knows not the time of his life: that, to him, is uncertain." And yet he promises himself long life, as (if) he might at will drive death aback. Thus was the rich man deceived of whom the Gospel speaks of Luke xvi. Therefore the Psalm (7) commands: *Diuicie si affluant: nolite cor apponere.* (If

us through." And soothly our enemy, that is the (death) follows us ever at the back; for as says Seneca: *Vita fugit, mors sequitur;* that is to say, "the life flies and the death freshly follows," for our life is nought else but passing from life; and S. Austin says that "life is but a swift running to the death." Therefore, it is nought to tell by, how long a man lives, but how well. Yet, this short life is uncertain and unstable how long it shall last: and therefore Job says: *Nescio quam diu subsistam, & si post modicum tollatt me factor meus:* "I wot not," says the holy man Job, "how long here I shall dwell, nor when my Maker will take me hence." Hereof speaks S. Gregory where he thus says: "I wot not," says this holy man, "the while I shall dwell here, nor when that I hence shall be taken and led to the doom." Man's life is likened to the wind, that of all things is most unstable. For S. Gregory says: "Short is man's life, and yet that shortness is ever uncertain." "Therefore," says S. Jerome, "nothing so much beguiles man as (that) man knows not the time of his life: that, to his wit, is uncertain"; and yet he promises himself long to live, as (if) he might at his will drive death aback. Thus was deceived the rich man of whom the Gospel speaks, that so much goods had raked together that he wist not where to put it, nothing grieved him, so all things fell to his will, save that he had no housing to put his goods in. Thus, all unwitting, he spake to himself: "My soul now may'st thou rest thee, and lead thy life with ease, for riches and goods enough thou hast to spend for many years." But, because he thought only of his goods and not once of death, a voice came from Almighty God, and sternly to him said: "ah! fool! this night the fiends of hell shall reive from thee thy soul: and that thou gathered so long together, who shall have it?" Happy had this rich man been and wiselier had he wrought, if he would have done after Solomon's counsel, who teaches all how they shall do if riches to them fall: *Diuicie si affluant, nolite appon-*

riches increase, set not thine heart on them.) For riches fail and last not with man; but glide away like a phantom. But when we have gotten goods together, with right or wrong, and with poor men's malisons, then suddenly, they go from their goods, or else their goods from them. And Holy Writ says: *Mundus transibit: & concupiscentia eius:* (The world passes away, and its desire). A man that is falling in the water, and through strength of the water is borne

ere cor: that is to say, "if riches to thee fall, fasten not thy heart on them"; for they are failing and aye not-lasting, and slippery (8) as an eel, so that when a man weens that he has them fast, as a phantom they glide from him, and (he) loses them for aye. And thus it is with earthly goods for which men swink so sore to gather them together, that rest they may have none, nor of aught else think: and when they have that they yearn (for) by right or by wrong, or with poor men's malisons that bitterly ban them, then when they think them most secure, and all things fall to them right as they would, suddenly they from them glide like a slippery eel men hold by the tail: for either their goods from them part while they are here, or else, they die, from their goods, when they would fainest live; and with them they bear nought but malisons and sins that shall wend with them to the strait doom, and challenge them before God: for with wrong and in ill-use they spend them, and over-mickle loved them against God's will. Unhappy methinks then are they that care over-mickle for them. And that (a) man shall not trust him in riches, *exemplum;* Mighty riches, that the world yields to those who for them swink, oblige them to make them secure that they should ever with them last. Yet lo, that then had men some colour to yearn for earthly goods and to swink for them heartily as men do now (9). But this, may not the world do in no wise; for that thing that he has not of himself, that may hinder that he shall not pass. And that he has not, give it to another. For Holy Writ says of the world and all its things, *Mundus transsibit, & concupiscentia eius.* That is to say thus much, "The world shall pass with all its things that men here yearn after, whatsoever they be": and the written law says thus: "That a man may give no more right in a thing to another than himself has."

Right as thou mayest see by a man that is fallen in to a water, and through strength, it bears him forth, and

forth and reft (from) the ground, if he may get anything that has a good fastening, as a root, he may hinder the water from bearing him forth; but by the thing that fleets as he (himself) does, he may not fasten himself. And soothly, willy nilly, in this life as in a water, with the goods of this life, ever are we passing, and nought is in this world to fasten us by, so that we shall not pass. For the wise man says: *Omnes morimur: & quasi aqua dilabimur in terram.* (All die, and like water are spilt upon the earth.) And Job says: *Ego opulentus quondam repente contritus sum, & ecce leues amici mei transierunt, & semitam quam non reuertor ambulo:* (10) and is as if he said, "Riches and friends had I many, but they all could not hinder, that it should not behove me to wend forth without again-coming." And by what passage man shall wend, the prophet shows: *Omnis caro fenum, & omnis gloria eius quasi flos agri,* "Man's flesh is as hay, and all his joy and noblesse as the flower of the meadow." Hay (at) first is green grass, and soon after brings forth flowers; and a while after, the flowers dry and fall; after, it is mown down with the scythe, and dried and led to housing for beasts' food. Thus it befalls man; in his childhood he springs and waxes as the grass does; after, he grows to (a) man, and flowers in fairness and strength and wit, and having of goods. After, he

reives him (from) the ground. If he can win to a stake or to a root that has good fastening, he may hinder the water from bearing him forth; but if he fastens himself to a thing that fleets as he does, he cannot hinder the water from bearing him forth and whither it will. But soothly, will we not or will we, in this world as (though) in a water, ever are we, with the goods of this world, passing, and nought is (there) in this world to fasten us by to hinder us that we shall not pass; for as the holy man by us says: *Omnes moriemur & sicut aqua dilabimur in terra,* that is thus much for to say, "We shall all die and as water wend into the earth." Therefore the holy man Job says by himself that here I know the truth: *Ego ille opulentus quondam, repente contritus sum, et ecce leues amici mei transierunt, et semitam per quam non reuertor ambulo.* "Lo," said this holy man, "I that sometime was so rich, to what mischief am I now fallen: lo! my short friends have left me; and by that way now I wend; but thereby I come never again"; and is as if he said "Riches and friends I had more than any in the land, and all that could not hinder me but that it behoved me to wend further; and willy nilly that way I wend, without again-coming." But which is this pass man shall wend by, the prophet there he shows in these words: *Omnis caro fenum, & omnis gloria eius quasi flos agri.* "Man," he says, "is as hay, and as flowers in the meadow that grow, that are to man lovely and fair." Man's flesh is as hay, and all his joy and nobleness as the flower in the meadow that grows so fair. Hay first waxes into green grass, and soon after it brings forth fair flowers; and if it stands, then, after a while, the flowers dry and fall; and afterwards it is mown down with the scythe and dried; afterwards it is carried to the house, and taken care of for beasts' food. Thus it fares with man born into this world; in his childhood he springs and waxes as does the grass that is lovely to look on; after he waxes to manhood, and so he flourishes in fairness and strength and wits

draws to age, and then fail his flowers which are his virtues, his beauty and strength, wit and other powers: after he is stricken down with the scythe of death, after, led to housing to (be) beasts' food, that is delved into the earth to feed worms. Therefore says the holy man: *Cum moritur homo: habitabit serpentes & bestias.* Man dead is so loathsome (11) to the world that he cannot let him be in his house three days together; but bears him out that he harm none with stink. Therefore is it now time for to work; for in time to come is no time to swink, but to receive meed for deeds ere done. And this the Angel affirms with oath and says: *Iuravit enim angelus, quod non erit tempus amplius.* (The angel swore, that there should be no further time.) Do we then as the Apostle says; *Dum tempus habemus, operemur bonum ad omnes.* (While we have time let us do good unto all.) And as the Apostle counsels us, (so) he did himself; for, from the first hour of the day unto the fifth, he travailed with his hands to win his food; and from the fifth to the tenth he preached to the folk; from the tenth till even he served the poor and pilgrims with such goods as he had; by night he was praying: and thus he spent his time.

In three manners man loses his time: in idleness or in works no good comes of, or in good works but not

and having of earthly goods that fall to him. Then, soon after he draws to old age, the flower falls and fails, i.e., his virtues, beauty, strength, wit, sight, feeling and hearing, and after that he is smitten down with death's scythe, afterwards carried to the house to be beasts' food, that is to say, delved he is into the earth to feed worms with. To this, witnesses the holy man where he says: *Cum moritur homo habitabit inter serpentes & bestias,* that is thus for to say, "When man is dead, with toads, adders and foul venomous beasts shall his dwelling be." What thing is so loathsome to the world or unworthy as is man when he is dead? What the world greatly esteems while a man lives, so contemptuously the world dismisses soon when he is dead, so that he cannot thole him in his house three days together; but he is borne out that he may not with stink harm him who comes; and is graven deep under the earth to be worms' meat. And therefore it is in this time to work; for in the time that is to come, there is no time to swink, but to receive meed for work ere-while done. And this the Angel affirms with an oath where he says thus: *Iuravit enim angelus; quod non erit tempus amplius,* that is thus much for to say; "the angel sware by an oath that after a man's death he shall have no time to win aught but that (which) he has before won." Wit he well therefore, it is to be done as the Apostle says and counsels: *Dum tempus habemur operemur bonum ad omnes:* that is to say, "While we have time do we good unto all." And as the Apostle counsels other men, himself did indeed; for as clerks say of S. Paul, ever was he stirring in some good works: for from the first hour of the day unto the fifth he travailed with his hands to win his food; and from the fifth hour unto the tenth hour to the folk he preached; and from noon till even he served the poor and pilgrims with such as he had; also by night was he praying and so spent his time.

In three manners, man loses his time: that is, in idleship; or in work that no good comes of; or in

ordained as they should be. Against idleness Solomon says: *Multam maliciam docuit ociositas.* (Idleness teaches much sin.) And Holy Writ says: *Qui sectatur ocium: stultissimus est.* (Who follows idleness is most foolish.) A great fool he is that forbears not the thing that harms him: more fool he is for he wins him no reward: most fool he is for he wins him pain. Therefore, God blames the idle man and says: *Quid hic statis tota die ociosi?* (Why standest thou here all the day idle?) Idleship wastes the goods that are getting wares and entices the fiend to the house; for as through good works the fiend is letted (12) to enter man's heart, so idleness draws (13) him in thereto: And Seneca says: "He lives not to himself that lives to his belly, and to the ease of his flesh in all that he can." For Job says: *Homo ad laborem natus est:* (Man was born to labour). To travail was man bound after he had sinned, through God's bidding Who to him said: *In s(udore) v(ultus) t(ui) ves(ceris) pa(ne) tuo, donec reuertaris in terram de qua assumptus es: quia de terra es; & in terram ibis.* (In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread, until thou returnest to the earth whence thou wert taken: for from earth thou art; and into earth shalt thou go.) Thou shalt travail stalwartly and not faintly; for he bids thee travail with the sweat of thy face, aye till thou turnest to the

good works but not ordained as they should be. First it is to destroy idleship; for it harms much; and this witnesses Solomon the witty, who thus says: *Multam maliciam docuit ociositas;* that is as much for to say, that "idleness teaches much malice and sin." And therefore says Holy Writ thereof: *Qui sectatur ocium stultissimus est,* that is as much for to say, "he that spends his time in idleship, over much he is a fool; for he forbears not the thing that does him harm; and yet more fool is he for he wins him no reward in the time; and all the most fool he is for he wins him pain." And therefore, God blames the idle, where to them He says: *Quid hic statis tota die ociosi?* that is to say, "Why stand ye here all the day idle, and will not work?" Idleship wastes goods that are won by goods, and therefore S. John says that nothing is worse than idleness, and not only because he wins nought, but because he wastes those that are won. Idleness entices the fiend to the house, and therefore says S. John, "ever be working some good work, that the fiend find thee not idle"; for as through good works the fiend is letted to enter into man's heart, so idleness makes way to man's heart and entices the fiend in. Idleness lets a man from living man's life orderly as is due to man; as the wise Seneca says: "He lives not to himself that lives to his belly and to the ease of his foul flesh in all that he can"; for he lives not to his (own) profit, nor to another's, and therefore, he lives not at all. For Job says: *Homo enim ad laborem natus est;* that is to say, "Man is born to travail." And therefore, the man that travails not, he lives not as a man.

To travail was man bound after he had sinned, through God's bidding, Who thus said to him: *In sudore vultus tui vesceris pane tuo, donec reuertaris in terram de qua assumptus es; quid terra es, & in terra ibis;* that is thus much for to say; "In sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread"; that is thou shalt travail stalwartly and not faintly, for He bids thee travail "with sweat of thy face"—he that travails,

earth; that is, all thy life-time, that thou lose no time in idleness. Idleness smites a man as (if) he were in paralysis, and makes his limbs dry that he cannot work. Therefore, says the Psalm-wright: *Manus habent & non pal(pabunt), pe(des) habent & non amb(ulabunt), os habent & non lo(quentur), oculos h(abent) & non v(idebunt), aures h(abent) & non audient;* (Hands have they and feel not, feet have they and walk not, a mouth have they and speak not, eyes have they and see not, ears have they and they hear not,) for their limbs are so bounden in sin, that to all good things they are as dead, and to ill things are they easy.(14) Idleness is the nurse to all vices, and makes a man reckless about doing that he is holden to do. And when the fiend finds a man idle, he puts in his heart foul thoughts of fleshly filth, or other follies that may bring him to sin: after that he eggs (15) him on to do them in deed. And this he does against the Apostle's bidding, that is, *Nolite dare locum diabolo.* (Give not place to the devil.) The idle man makes himself unworthy to dwell in any place but hell. In

that sweats heartily, he that swinks: and so thou shouldest, "aye till thou turn into the earth," he says "thou art off taken"; that is, all thy life thou (shalt) travail, that thou lose no time. The vice of idleship, it lets much good, and makes man unworthy to do any good, and smites him as it were with a palsy, so that all his limbs dry, and he can do no good as he should: therefore speaks the Psalm writer where he thus says:—*Manus habent et non palpabunt, pedes habent et non ambulabunt, os habent et non loquentur, oculos habent et non videbunt, aures habent et non audient;* that is thus much for to say; "They have hands," he says, "but they work not; feet they have but they go not; mouths they have but they speak not; eyes they have and see not; ears they have but they hear not—for their limbs are so bounden in sin that to all thing that is evil they are easy; but to do good they are as dead." Yet idleness is a vice that works great evil; for it is a nurse to all that is evil, S. Clement says, for it makes man reckless and forgetful to do that (which) he is holden to do, if he shall be saved. For when the fiend finds a man idle, then he draws him near to himself to draw him to his works. First, he puts foul thoughts in his heart, and provokes him with foul yearnings of filthy flesh, or of other follies that bring men to sin: after, he pricks him to do these yearnings in deed; and thus he makes him to lose himself in sin; his time also, and lets him from doing good deeds that might help him to heaven. And thus he does against the Apostle's counsel, that thus to all men says: *Nolite dare locum diabolo;* that is to say, "Give no place to the fiend." But in that man that travails in good works, the fiend can find no place in him for to rest; for whatsoever a vessel is, so that it be level full, if men put more therein, it casts it (out) again. And that man makes his way to the fiend and entices him to rest with him, and fulfils in deed whatsoever he bids him; and thus he makes himself unworthy to dwell in all other places, but only in hell;

heaven may he not dwell, for heaven is full meed to those that here spend their time in such works that they hope they are satisfaction to Christ. In Purgatory may no idle dwell, for there are only the good, (being) purged in that cleansing fire, till they be as clean of sin as when they were christened: therefore says the Psalm-wright: *In labore hominum non sunt: & cum h(ominibus) non flag(ellabuntur).* (17) Great shame it is to be idle in this time of grace, in the which we are hired to work; and if we work as we ought great meed awaits us. God gives us example to work, by Himself as the Apostle witnesses where he says: *Exinaniuit semetipsum: for(mam) ser(ui) ac(cipium) in similitudinem hominum factus, et habitu inuentus vt homo; humiliauit semetipsum, factus obedi(ens) vsque ad m(ortem), m(ortem) autem cru(cis): propter quod & deus ex(altauit) il(lum) & dedit il(li) nomen quod est su(per) o(mne) nomen, vt in n(omine) Ihesu, omne ge(nu) fl(ectatur) ce(lestium), t(errestrium) & inf (ernorum), & omnis lingua con(fiteatur) quia dominus Iesus Christus in g(loria) est dei patris.*[1] Over-proud

[1] These two long passages are translated in the Thornton rendering.

for as hell is the dwelling-place of the foul fiend, right so is it housing to the idle man who here serves him in sin. And that this thus is, by reason (16) it may be proved. Truth it is (that) the idle man may not dwell in heaven, for heaven is only full reward for them that in this life spend their time in those works that they hope be to satisfy Christ. In Purgatory none such may dwell; for there only the good are purged in that cleansing fire till they be as clean as when they were christened; and hereto, the Psalm-writer witnesses where he thus says: *In labore hominum non sunt, & cum hominibus non flagellabuntur,* that is thus for to say: "The idle travail not with men; therefore they shall not in purgatory suffer pain with those men that are in the way to heaven." But they shall be for ever tortured in hell with the fiend, for they, as his thralls, served him in sin. Great shame is it for Christian men now idle to be in the time that now is, that is called the time of grace, in the which time example is showed us of good works, and we are hired for to work; and if we work as we ought, great meed awaits us. First, God Himself set example that we should love to work, as the Apostle by Him says: *Exinaniuit semetipsum formam serui accipiens, in similitudinem hominum factus & habitu inuentus vt homo: humiliauit semetipsum factus obediens vsque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis; propter quod deus exaltauit illum & donauit illi nomen quod est super omne nomen, vt in nomine Ihesu omne genu flectatur, celestium, terrestrium et infernorum, et omnis lingua confiteatur quia dominus Ihesus in glorie est dei patris,* this is as much for to say: "He, this is God's Son of heaven, with travail has wasted Himself, He took the body of thralls, made to (the) likeness of men, in clothing found as a man: He meeked himself and buxom became unto death, there to die on the cross: therefore God has highed Him and given Him a name that is above all that bears a name, so that in the Name of Jesus all spirits shall kneel, of hell, of heaven and earth, and all shall bear

then and over-delicate is the servant that in battle will rest and sees his Lord of His enemies assailed and evil wounded. Also we ought to work in this time of grace, for we are God's thralls, bought with the price of His dear-worthy blood, to work in His vineyard. And yet, He promises us meed, if we do with goodwill what we ought to do from debt. To His privy friends before the time of grace, God promised but earthly goods if they did well; to us, the bliss of heaven, if we do well. And if He promised any of His privy friends the bliss of heaven, it was long after before they might come thereto, for they went to hell and abode there, some a thousand years, some two, some three, before to heaven they came: but now may men, in a little while win heaven; as if any die soon after he is christened, or if he have done full penance for his misdeed, or be martyred for God's love. The time of supper that the Gospel of S. Luke speaks of, to the which God bade His servants call all that were bidden, is the time of grace that is now, in the which all is ready; so that there is nought else to do but wash and go to meat; that is, cleanse them of all the sins that they have done since they were born. What losing

witness that our Lord Jesus Christ dwells with His Father in joy." Over-proud then is the servant and over-delicate that in a battle will rest, and sees his Lord before his eyes being assailed of His enemies and of them evil wounded. The tother skill is why we should work now in this time of grace, for we are God's bought thralls, with the price of His dear-worthy blood, not to sit idle, but for to work in His vineyard; and yet He promises us meed if we do with good will that which through debt we ought for to do. The third skill is, that more meed He promises us if we do His will, than He promised to His privy friends before the time of grace. To them, if well they did, He promised earthly goods; to us He promises to dwell with Him for ever in His bliss. The fourth is, if He to any of His privy friends promised the bliss of heaven, a long time after it was before they might win thereto; and yet it behoved them to wend by hell and there make long abiding: some a thousand winters, some two thousand, and some three thousand winters or they to heaven might come. But now, in a little while, we may win heaven at will; as if any die soon after he is christened, either if he have done full penance for his misdeeds that he may undo the pain of purgatory that he for them should thole, or martyrs that shed their blood for God's sake. Bliss is now ready for man if he deserves it, and therefore as tells the Gospel of S. Luke, *Misit dominus seruum suum hora cene dicere invitatis ut venirent, quia iam parata sunt omnia;* that is thus much for to say; "God has sent His servant in the supper-time to say (to) them that were bidden, that they should come and no dwelling (18) make, for all is ready that is prepared for the feast." This time of supper is the time of grace that now is, in which all is ready without letting to bring man to bliss. There is nought else to do but to wash men's hands, and set them the meat; that is, that they perfectly be cleansed from all their sins that they have done against God's will since the time that they were

of time it is to travail about things that no profit comes of. Man ought to travail only to the worship of God; and his soul-healing. Thou shalt not deem the man has lived long, though he go with a staff stooping, and be grey-haired: but deem him so old as he has lived well. Therefore answered Barlaham to his disciple Iosaphath, when he asked him how old he was: "I am," quoth he, "of forty-five years." "Master," quoth Iosaphath, "methinks thou art of sixty years and more." Then said Barlaham, "Since I was born has been sixty years, but those years that I spent in idleness and sin, or taking myself to this life, I hold as years of death: But all those I call years of life that I have served Iesus Christ my Lord in and through His dear-worthy grace." Who would so umthink (19) him, what Time steals from him, in long eating and drinking, in excess and unnate (20) works, idle speech, idle thought and foul, unnate jests (21) and other vanities that men delight them in, he may soothly understand that though he be old in years, that he has lived little time in the manner that he should have lived, for he lived not to his profit, nor won him reward, but peradventure pain for losing of time. It were a wonder if a man that gives himself to this world more than needs, had no letting in prayer, in rest of heart, in soothfastness of words, in perfection of good works, in love to God and all Christian men.

born. What losing of time it is to travail about those things that no profit comes of, for to travail about such things is wasting of life. His life is long who travails in what he may for himself, that is to the worship of God and his soul-healing. Thou shalt not deem a man that he has lived long though thou see him white-haired and go stooping with a staff; for there is nought to tell of that part of man's life that is wasted in idleness and deadly sin. Therefore answered Barlaham to Iosaphat his disciple that to him said, "Master how old art thou; I pray thee if it be thy will tell to me the truth." And he answered and said, "I am of forty years and five." "Master," quoth Iosaphat, "methinks that thou shouldest be of sixty years and more." And then answered Barlaham, "If thou askest me of all those years that I have lived since I was born, then have I lived as many as thou saidst last. But those years I spent in idleness and sin, before I took to the life that I now hold, those years I hold (to be) years of death. But all those years I call years of my life that I have served Christ my Lord in (and) through His dear-worthy grace; for years of deeds are not to be accounted (by) years of life." Whoso would umbethink him what Time steals from him in long eating and outrageously drinking, what in unnate works and idleship, idle thoughts and foul, unnate words, and other vanities that Man delights him in, he should soothly understand and find that though he be old in years, that little has he lived; and that is for to say, in the manner he should have lived if he well umbethink himself: for he lived not to his profit nor won him a reward as he should have done, but peradventure won him pain, for losing his time. A wonderful thing it were if the man who gives himself to the business of this world more than needs had no letting in prayer, in rest of heart, in soothfastness of words, in perfection of good works, in love to God and to all Christian men. I trow that whoso will with a clean heart weigh these many lettings, he may find

Therefore, holy men, before his time, that knew their letting, they fled the world and all its vanities, as if it had been cursed, for they thought they could not live a righteous life therein. And therefore they went into the wilderness, where they trowed to serve God to good account. Therefore, says Seneca : *Auarior redeo, & crudelior & inhumanior: quia inter homines fui.*(22) (I return greedier, and more cruel, and more inhuman ; because I was among men.)

Three manners of Occupations there are, as arid and much chattering, raking about, much travailing about earthly things. Against much chattering, Solomon says : *Qui dimittit aquam: caput est iurgii.* (Who lets out water is the cause of strife.) "Let the water out" is to let the tongue fleet out in chattering. But to the knowing of God may none come of himself, who lets his heart fleet out with much unnate speech, for he makes way within himself for the fiend. Therefore Solomon likens such (a one) to a city without a wall : *Sicut vrbs sine murorum ambitu: ita vir qui non potest cohibere spiritum in loquendo.* (Like a city without an enclosing wall, is a man who cannot control his spirit in speaking.)

what oft-time will let him from serving God to good account. And therefore, holy men, before his time, who knew their lettings, they fled the world with all its vanities right as if it were cursed, for they thought they could no rightwise life live therein; and therefore they went into the wilderness, for there they trowed they could better serve their Lord to good account. For Seneca the wise says: *Auarior redeo & crudelior (&) inhumanior, quia inter homines fui:* "More greedy I am," says Seneca, "and more covetous, and more keen and less a man I am, for having dwelt among men."

Of Three Manners of Occupations.

Three manners of occupations are there besides, as in arid and great chattering, in raking outside, and in great travailing about worldly things. First, many may travail themselves in much chattering and against this Solomon says: *Qui dimittit aquam, caput est iurgii:* that is, "he that lets out the water, he is the head of the striving." "Let the water out" is let the tongue fleet out in much chattering; and as many unnate words and idle that a man speaks, so many times he lets the water out. But to knowing of God may no man of himself win that lets his heart out-fleet with much unnate speech; for he makes a way in himself to the fiend, his foe. And therefore such (a one) Solomon likens to a city that is without walls, when he thus says: *Sicut vrbs sine murorum ambitu, ita vir qui non potest cohibere spiritum suum in loquendo;* that is, thus much for to say; "whoso refrains not his tongue from much speech, he is as a city without walls, where hosts may enter over all." The fiend of hell with his host goes through that mouth that ever is open with evil speech. In *Vitis Patrum* it is told of a holy man that said when men praised a fellowship of brothers that he had heard (to be) of much speaking; *Boni vtique sunt, set habitacio eorum non habet Ianuam; quicunque wlt intrat & asinum soluit:* "Good" quoth he, "they are; but their dwelling has

no gate; whoso will may go in and lead forth the ass," that is their unwitty souls. Therefore says S. James: *Si quis putat se religiosum esse, non refrenans linguam suam, sed seducens cor suum, huius vana est religio,* that is to say, "If any weens that he is religious and bridles not his tongue, his religion is vain, he beguiles his heart." He says very well, "he bridles not his mouth." A bridle is not only in the horse's mouth, for some is about his eyes, and some about the ears, for (of) all three there is great need that they bridled be. In the mouth, the heavy iron lies on the light tongue, for that is most to hold. Often we think, when we begin to speak, to speak little and to set our words well: but the tongue is slippery, for it wades in water, and glides lightly forth from few words to many, from good to some ill; from sooth to lies; and then, as Solomon says, *In multiloquio non deest peccatum,* that is thus for to say, "Great speech, begin it never so well, may not be without sin": for from sooth it strikes into false, out of good into evil, from measure (23) to over much, and as, from a drop and a drop, waxes (into) a great flood that drowns the soul, for with the fleeting word the heart fleets out, so that (for) long thereafter it cannot gather (itself) together. And therefore says S. Gregory thus: *et os nostrum tanto est deo longinquum, quanto mundo proximum; tanto (minus) exauditur in prece quanto magis inquinatur (stulta) locucione,*—these are S. Gregory's words in his *Dialogues* that are thus for to say: "As near as our mouth is to the world's speech, so far is it from God when we speak to Him and pray to Him for aught, for this is when we call on Him and He withdraws Himself again from our cry, because He will not hear it; for we stink to Him as of the idle speech and idle chatter that has filled us." Therefore whoso will that God's ear be near his mouth when he to Him prays, let him draw his heart from the world, else may he long cry or ever God him hears, as He says through the prophet Isaiah: *Cum extenderitis manus vestras*

And because so much letting of good is in much talking, the Philosopher binds his disciples to silence their first five years. Also Abbot Agathon bore three years a stone in his mouth to learn him to hold himself still. Against those that ever rake about to feed their wits with vanities and lusts, is the teaching of the angel, how he learned the holy Abbot Arsenius and said: "Arsenius, flee the world and its yearnings: hold thee in rest, bridle thy tongue that it fleet not out in chattering and idle speech." Where these three are is a way to God and withdrawing from evil. It tells of an Abbot that fully twenty years sat in his school and never lifted up his head to see the school-roof. Against those that travail over-much about worldly goods says Solomon thus: *Vana est spes eorum, & labor eorum sine fructu. Quia nichil auferunt secum de vniuerso labore suo.* (Vain is their hope and their labour fruitless; for they carry nought away of all their labour.) This is every day seen by the dead who, be they never so rich, with them bear but a winding-cloth.

auertam oculos meos a vobis: that is to say " When ye make manifold prayers to Me, ye that play with the world, I hear you not that while; I will turn Me away when your hands lift to Me." For so much letting of good is in much speech say the philosophers that they bind their disciples with silence (for) the first five years, as S. Ambrose says: and written it is by a holy Abbot that was called Agathon, that three years he bore a stone in his mouth to learn him to hold him still. The second (24) is of those that can have no rest, but ever are raking about from place to place, and for no other cause than to feed their wits with vanities and lusts such as the flesh desires. " Flee the world and its yearnings and hold thee in rest, and bridle the tongue that it does not out-fleet neither in chattering nor in idle speech." These three the holy angel learned the Abbot Arsenius, that he should heed them: for where these three that the Angel teaches are held, there is a way to God, withdrawing from evil. It tells of an Abbot that fully twenty years sat in his cell, that never lifted up his head to see the cell-roof. The third is of those that waste their time with travail out of covetousness to gather themselves more worldly things than they need; and of such speaks Solomon the wise and tells what betides them for all their great swink; hear what, therefore, he says of them: *Vana est spes eorum et labor sine fructu:* " false is their hope," he says, " and their travail without meed ": and again he says of such-like men: *Nichil aufert secum de vniuerso labore suo;* that is, thus much for to say, " Nothing with him he bears, when he hence wends, of all that he has won with care and swink." This is every day seen by those who are dead, that bear with them to their long home, of all the goods they had, were they never so rich, but a little clout of cloth to conceal their body with—no more the world vouchsafes them—that they so greatly loved.

Hereof (25) should the rich think who play them with the world, and those covetous men who pill (26)

the poor, that rake wholly together all that they can gather, recks he (27) never of whom, be he poor or be he rich he takes no keep, but only (of) what he hath; and all is but phantom and dream that they deal with. It is just the same with a rich man, who here has his liking of gold and silver, and of other fleshly liking, wherewith the world deceives him as an unworthy wretch, as with a poor man that hungers very sorely and so sorely thirsts that he almost dies. After long hunger has tortured him, he falls on sleep, and he dreams that he is bidden to a feast, and set high on the dais, and all dainties that his heart may think (are) set before him, wine and piment (28) in fair cups. He eats and drinks at his will, and makes him right glad; and all who about him stand are fain to do his will. After he has eaten what he thinks good, the cloth is drawn, and he with great grandeur (29) to Chamber is gone; and there he thinks he eats spice and drinks the wine, and afterwards to bed he is brought, as it were a prince; and wrapped in rich robes upon him, new, well furred with vair (30) and gris.(31) But when this wretch wakens, he feels his legs all cold. He thinks on that grandeur he thought he was in, and of all that rich splendour he thought was about his bed. He gropes about him if (so) he might find aught of those rich clothes he weened were on him; but then he feels nought else but tatters and rags: and he hungers and thirsts more than he did before. Then knows he soothly it was but a dream: that false phantom made him trow it was a feast. Just so (32) the world's false riches provoke the rich, making them ween that all is sooth that phantom learns them. So, witless riches make them that they forget themselves, and set lightly by those who really won those riches. They make feasts of those goods they pilled from the poor, and every man, out of fear, is fain to do their will. But when death shall waken them from that baleful dream, then find they but a phantom all that they weened had been sooth.

The third manner of men are that have liking to do good; and because they do it not in the manner they should do it in, they lose their meed, for before their intent falls to any good deed, the meed that should fall to good works fails. And that may be on four manners. First, for the wickedness of the working, like the offering of Cain, that though he offered to God of the fruit, which came anew to him, God would not look thereunto; but to the offering of Abel his brother, God looked. Therefore says S. Gregory; "By the heart's will of him that offers, is the gift received or reproved by God." And God was not satisfied with Abel for the offering, but He was satisfied with the offering for Abel's sake, who, in all his work, was true and good. But to Cain and his offering, God would not look, for he that made the offering dissatisfied God greatly. And why our offering, or what we do that is good in its nature, displeases God, the prophet says: *Cum multiplicaueritis oraciones, non exaudiam; quia manus vestrae sanguine plene sunt.* (When ye multiply prayers, I will not hear; for your hands are full of blood.) The second that reives man's meed from his good deed, is (that) vanity which stirs man to do good because he would be praised. For vain-glory makes evil of good: as, if alms-deeds that are good in nature be done *for* pleasing, it wins but sin. The third that

The third manner of men there are that have liking to do good, but because they do it not in the manner they should do, they put the meed of their good deeds in a broken sack; for they love their reward that they should win, if they wrought those good deeds with a good intent; for there where good intent fails in any good deed, there meed which should fall to the good works, fails also. And that may fail in four manners. The first for the wickedness of the working: as it tells in the first Book of the Law that Cain, Adam's son, offered to God of the fruit that was renewed to him; to this offering of Cain, God would not look, but to the offering of Abel, his brother. Of these words, S. Gregory speaks and says: "By the heart's will of him that makes the offering is the gift received by God or therewithal reproved," for of Abel it is written, that God first looked to Abel and afterwards to his gift, for to understand that God was not pleased with Abel for the offering, but with the offering for Abel's sake, who in all his work was good and true, and for that God looked. But to Cain and his offering God would not look, that was because he that made the offering displeased God greatly. Why our offering mispleases God, or whatsoever we do that is good in nature, the holy prophet shows by skill; let whoso will hear and learn, for thus he says: *Cum multiplicaueritis oraciones, non exaudiam quia manus vestre plene sanguine sunt:* that is thus for to say: "When ye make many prayers to Me I will not hear them, for your hands are full of blood, that betokens sin." Yet again,(33) why travail falls without meed is that vanity that stirs many to do good, as it is when men do any good that is good in nature, because we would be praised of men for our goodness. Therefore says God to all men that have such intention to be praised of men: "If ye do so, forsooth I say, ye lose your rewards." For vain-glory is that thing that makes good into evil; as it is by alms-deeds that are in nature good; but being done for men's praise it wins but sin. The third that reives

reives meed from good deeds is praising of himself that does the good deed, as the Pharisee did, of whom God said to the folk that stood before Him, "Soothly, this man has lost his meed for all his good deeds." Needful therefore it is that a man do the good he may, and pride himself not thereof in thought or in word; for he has not of himself, nor by his deserving, the doing of good deeds. The fourth that reives man's meed from his good deeds, when he does it with intent to be held better than another; or to lessen the good deeds of another, or to destroy them so far as he may. Of such-like, S. Gregory in the *Dialogues,* tells a tale. That on a time the holy Bishop Fortunatus chased the fiend out of a man in one evening; and the fiend when he was chased out, put himself into the likeness of a pilgrim, and went through the city where the bishop dwelt, weeping and yelling like a poor wretch, as one that needed a shelter that night, and thus cried he:

man's rewards for his good works is the self-praising of those who do the good deed; and that God says in the Gospel by the Pharisee, who told his good deed in God's Temple where he prayed, before the folk: therefore of Him God said to all that before Him stood, "Soothly this man has lost his meed for all his good deeds, trust (34) he not otherwise." Of this Pharisee, says S. Gregory: "Lo, so many good deeds are lost through one sin. This man, as himself said, fasted two days in a week, and paid well his teinds,(35) of all that he raised, and overpassed many others with his good deeds: but because he praised himself for his deeds, he lost all that he did." Needful therefore it is for a man to do the good he may, and that he warily um-look him that he pride not himself thereof in thought or in word. And therefore of this Pharisee, S. Gregory says: "As reproved of God he went to his house; for to himself had he given the merit of his good deed, and with his words made himself better than he was." For on four manners men lose meed of their good deeds.(36) The first is when man weens that the good he has, he has it of himself. The tother is where he trows that God gives those goods because he has deserved them. The third is when he praises himself for his good deeds. The fourth when he despises others for their good deeds, because he would be held better than any other. Again, deeds that are good fail of their meed when men do them with the intent to be held better than any other, or to lessen the good deeds of another, or to ruin it so far as he can. And to such-like good doers, S. Gregory speaks, and tells of a holy bishop, called Fortunatus, who through grace that he had of God, he chased fiends out of them they had dwelt in. And so befell one time, that this Fortunatus one eventide chased the fiend out of a man. As soon as he was chased out, the fiend put himself in the likeness of a pilgrim, and went through the city where the bishop was, weeping and yelling like a poor wretch, as if he wanted harbouring for the night. And

"Look, what your bishop, that you hold so good, has done to me. He came to the house where I had taken my lodging, and put me out with force; and now as a poor wretch am I desirous of harbour; above all things I seek a harbour, and none have ruth on me." A man of that city heard this, took him into his house, and set him by the fire and eased him in his way. When the man had inquired of him about far-off things, as men do of pilgrims, the fiend started up to the child in the cradle, and writhed his neck in two, and cast it into the fire and vanished away. Of this, S. Gregory speaks and says: "Many deeds seem good that are not good, because they are not done with a good will. And this man harboured the pilgrim, not for the pity he had on him, but because he spake evil of the bishop, and that he should (himself) be holden (to be) better and of more compassion than the bishop."

Again, a good deed is lost if by it a man covet to have, of men, riches, or state, or honours, or any worldly goods. Again, through defiling sin, a good deed is lost: and hereto Holy Writ accords, that says: *Qui in uno peccavit; multa bona perdit;* (he who sins in one thing, loses many goods,) that is, "he that in one thing sins deadly, many goods he loses," unless he amend him with shrift, and do penance therefore.

then began he to cry so that all the city might hear: "Lo! what your bishop has done to me, whom you hold so good and holy. When I had taken my harbour and weened to have been at rest, the bishop came to the house and put me out with force; and now as a poor wretch I desire harbour. Above all, lodging I seek, and none will (take) ruth on me." A man of that city that heard this, and heard him speak thus, took him into his house, and set him by the fire and eased him on this wise. When the man had spoken with the pilgrim as he weened him, and he inquired of him (for) distant tidings, as men do (of) pilgrims, the fiend started to the child in the cradle, and writhed the neck in two, and cast it into the fire and vanished away suddenly: and so, at his departure, he quitted the man for his good deed. Of this, S. Gregory speaks and says: "Many seem good deeds that are not good because they are not done with a good will. For this man that harboured the pilgrim who was a fiend, it was for no pity that he had on him, but only because he spake ill of his bishop. He called him to the house (so) that he should be holden better and more pitiful than his bishop was: as he who harboured the poor that the bishop with force turned out of his house." Thus is it with many that do good (in order) to lessen the good deeds of other men, and to destroy them withal.

Again, good deeds are without meed, when desirous to win great honours or any goods of the world, in order to have praise of men; though to man's judgment it seems that many do good; and do it only for God: nevertheless (37) many of those (38) that are above named reive their reward from them. Again, through defiling sin a good deed is lost, and hereto Holy Writ accords (which) says; *Qui in vno peccavit multa bona perdidit:* that is thus for to say, "he that sins (in) one thing, many good deeds he loses," that is unless he amend him with shrift and do penance therefore.

The Second Part of the Book.

II. The second part of this book teaches man to do his good works with a freedom of spirit, in place and time, as work to each falls, not of necessity, to do it with anger, nor with a dead heart. For Holy Writ says, *Hillarem datorem diligit deus,* "God loves those that give Him aught with a glad heart." And especially works that are due to the praise of God, and health to man's soul, as Prayers and holy thoughts, and a clear memory of God and of God's deeds, these and other such-like will have little rest, if they shall be well. Prayer is a sacrifice that greatly satisfies God, if it be made in the manner it ought to be: therefore, God asks it of us as a debt, where He thus says: *Gentes creauit deus in laudem et gloriam suam. Et: sacrificium laudis ho(norificabit) me.* (God created men to His honour and praise; and the sacrifice of praise honours me.) And the Apostle: *Oportet semper orare et nunquam deficere.* (It behoves always to pray and never to fail.) "Therefore it behoves man ever to pray and never fail." He is ever praying that is aye doing good. And specially, men of religion are bound to worship God with prayer, and men of Holy Kirk,

II. The second part that teaches man to do good: he is bound to do it in place and time, as good deeds fall to each, with freedom of spirit, and not forced thereto, nor with anger nor with a dead heart. For God takes with great thanks what a man does with a glad heart; therefore the wise man says by God: *Hillarem datorem diligit deus,* that is thus for to say "God loves those that give Him aught with a glad heart," and especially those works that belong to God's honour, and to His praise, and to the liking of man's soul; and ghostly works, as prayers and holy thoughts, and clear remembrance of God and of His good deeds. These and others like to them will have little rest if they shall be well; for as the holy man says, "prayers without devotion are like the clattering of pies.(39) For prayer is a sacrifice that greatly satisfies God, if it be made in the manner that it ought to be; therefore God asks it of us as a debt, that we pay it to Him, where He says to us: *Sacrificium laudis honorificabit me,* that is to say, "with sacrifice of prayer thou shalt honour Me." And that is (a) good reason: for God made man because He would be praised by him: and therefore Holy Writ says: *Gentes creauit deus in laudem et gloriam suam;* that is thus to say, "God made man to His honour, and His worship and His praising." Therefore, the Apostle says: *Oportet semper orare & nunquam deficere,* that is thus for to say, "therefore (it) behoves men to pray and never fail." He is ever praying that is aye well working. Right so it is with prayer as with drawing to our end. For ever in caring for our bodily life, we need to draw our breath, that is to draw in air; & so it is by prayer to the care of our soul's life. Therefore, if we do not draw from God through prayer we are to blame. Therefore it is to draw men betimes from the world and its business, that they may better serve their Lord in prayer and in liking, with those things which may move (men) to Him; and though all be bound to worship God with prayer, men of religion, who live by

for they live by alms and teinds—for all the world travails to bring to hand what they need, so that they may serve God with rest, and with their holy prayers make reconciliation between God and man. And also maidens and widows that have vowed (themselves to) chastity, all these, before others, are bound to pray. He that will satisfy God with prayer, and offer it to God with a free will and loving heart, and prepare himself before as Solomon counsels: *Ante oraciam; prepara animam t(uam) & noli esse quam homo temptans deus.* (Before thou prayest prepare thine heart, and be not as a man tempting God.)

alms, are specially bound, and men of Holy Church that live by teinds: for all the world travails to bring to their hands all that they need, so that they may with more rest serve God better, and with holy deeds make reconciliation between God and man. And also maidens and widows that have vowed (themselves) to chastity,—all these before others are most of all bound. It is not with heavenly works as with other works which in the world fall, whereunto a man is often constrained to work against his will, like an ox that the yoke leads to draw, think him never so evil: but this work that I speak of wills to be done with freedom of spirit and with liking in God, for that softens all travail, be it never so great. And therefore, he that will please God with prayer, (let him) do and think to demean himself to seek grace from God, and have remembrance of Him with recollection, as he is taught here, and he shall not fail to come to the grace of God, and everlasting health. To which health, etc.(40)

Here the Thornton MS. breaks off. The rest of the Treatise is from the Arundel MS. only.

ARUNDEL MS.

He tempts God that yearns not to win that he prays for, or despairs to speed thereof; and that does sin and evil life, that man thinks not to love. Of such-like says S. Gregory: *Quid mirum si tarde a domino exaudimur; cum precipientem dominum tarde aut nullo modo audimus?* ("What wonder if we are heard tardily by God; when tardily or not at all we listen to God commanding?") And Isidorus: *Non potest habere certam fiduciam precum; qui adhuc in preceptis dei pigritat, & quem recordacio peccandi delectat.* (He cannot have certain confidence in his prayers, who is slothful about God's commands, and whom the remembrance of sinning pleases.) Whoso will speed of his prayer: (let him) do the good he may, flee sin, call his heart from the world and hold it at home as the Gospel teaches; *Cum oraveris: intra in cu(biculum) t(uum) & clauso os(tio) ora p(atrem) t(uum).* "Enter," he says, "thy bed," (that is, call thy heart home); "and then shut thy door"; that is, hold thy wits in thee that none wend out. For it is but folly to pray God come to us needful and poor wretches, to deal us alms of His dear-worthy grace, and not abide His coming, but turn Him the back. S. Isidore says the soul is to be cleansed from the touch of sin, and the heart withdrawn from the provocations of the world, so that prayer may rise without letting to God. For far is that man from God, pray he never so much, that (when) praying is provoked with worldly thoughts; therefore says the Psalm: *Vacate et videte quoniam ego sum;* ("Be still and see that I am God.") This ought to stir us to pray with a great dread and consideration; for we speak with Almighty God when we are but unworthy wretches. For so did Abraham, God's privy friend, that said *Loquor ad dominum meum cum sum pulvis et cinis?* (Shall I when I am dust and ashes speak to my Lord?) And Isidore says "We must pray with sighings and tears and remembrance of our grimly sins, and of the many tortures

and bitter we shall thole for them, unless we amend us, and (He) have ruth on us." Also (one) praying shall hope to speed of that he prays, for Christ Himself says: *Omnia possibilia sunt credenti,* (all things are possible to him who believes). Therefore, we shall pray to God as to our Father, and hope certainly to speed with our Father, concerning that we pray Him for. For He says to all His . . . He says: *Siquid petieritis patrem in n(omine) m(eo), dabit vobis:* (if you ask the Father in My Name, He will give it you). Six things are to wit in prayer: first, How shall a man prepare himself before? The second (to) whom shall he pray? The third, For whom he shall pray? The fourth, What he shall ask in prayer? The fifth, What lets prayer? The sixth, What might and virtue prayer is of?

The first is written before[2] and begins at *Ante oracionem prepara a(nimam) t(uam),* and lasts hither.[3] The second, to whom thou shalt pray. Soothly before all others to God Almighty, as the prophet bids: *Subditus esto domino, & ora eum.* (Be subject to God and pray to Him.) And in the Gospel, God says: *Dominum deum tuum adorabis.* (Thou shalt adore thy Lord God.) Hallows, we honour and pray (to) not as givers of goods, but as God's friends, to help us to win that of Him we pray after. Therefore, let us believe with all our heart in God, and (with) certain hope and perfect charity our Lord God is to be loved. The third, for whom men shall pray? A great clerk shows: Every Christian man is a quick limb of Holy Church, therefore is he bound to pray for all, but specially for men of Holy Church, the Pope, Cardinals, and bishops, and all that have cure of men's souls; also for our foes and friends: and all that are in deadly sin, that they through grace may rise: for all that are in Purgatory that abide the mercy of God and

[2] Already above.
[3] As far as here.

afterwards all that have a trade,[4] quick and dead. And S. Gregory says he shall sooner be heard and sped of his prayer who prays for all. And S. Ambrose: *Si pro omnibus roges; pro te omnes rogabunt;* (if thou prayest for all, for thee all shall pray). And S. Jerome, "Need binds man to pray for himself; but charity of brotherhood stirs (man) to pray for all, and charity stirs God to hear, more than needfulness."

The fourth, what man shall ask in prayer? Certainly, grace in this life, and endless joy in that other; for thus God teaches us and says: *Primum querite r(egnum) dei & ius(ticiam) eius, & hec o(mnia) ad(icientur)vobis.* (First seek the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added to you.) God is debtor to them that are rightwise, to find them what they need of earthly goods,[5] for rightwiseness makes of men God's children; and the Father is bound, through kinship, to find for His children. Earthly goods are not to be asked in prayer, for they have done harm to many; therefore says Solomon: *Vsquequo stulti ea qui sibi sunt noxia cupiunt?* (How long, ye fools, do ye desire things noxious to you?) Therefore, every man should ask what he asks of God with dread and pray his Lord, if He sees that his prayer be needful and skill-full, that He fulfil it: and if it be neither needful nor skill-full, that He withdraw it; for what may help and what may harm wots better the leech than the sick man. But one of these two shall we trust to have through prayer: either that we pray for, or that which better is for us.

The fifth, what lets our prayer to be heard of God? Six things: The first is sin of the praying (man): as God says through the prophet: *(Cum)multiplicaueritis oraciones: non exaudiam, manus enim v(estra) s(anguine) p(lene) s(unt).* (When ye multiply prayers,

[4] M.E. *mester,* which Rolle spells mister or myster. Here, it is spelt mister.

[5] This daring statement has the savour of Rolle. He carried out its spirit in his life, after leaving home.

I will not hear, for your hands are full of blood.) And David: *(Iniqui) tatem si as (pexi) in corde m(ea) non exaudiet dominis:* (If I have looked upon iniquity with my heart, the Lord will not hear). And the prophet: *Peccata nostra absconderunt (faciem) eius a nobis.* (Our sins have hid His face from us.) And the Gospel: *Scimus quoniam peccatores non ex(audit) dominus.* (Because we knew that the Lord will not hear sinners.) The second is the unworthiness of those things men pray for, and that God, through the prophet, forbids them to pray for: *Noli orare pro populo isto, neque assumas pro eis (laudem &) oracionem: quia non exaudiam.* (Pray not for this people, neither lift up for them (praise and) prayer: for I will not hear.) It tells in the *Lives* of the Holy Fathers, that one that was bound in sin came to the holy Abbot S. Antony, and said, "Holy Father, have mercy on me, and pray for me." To whom the Abbot said, "I will have no mercy on thee, unless thou help thyself and leave thy sin."

The third is foul thoughts and idle that let us to think on our prayer. Of such-like false praying says God through the prophet: *Populus iste labiis me honorat, cor autem eius longe est a me.* (This people honour me with their lips, but the heart is far from me.) It is great wickedness of us unworthy wretches, that when we speak with prayer to Almighty God, and we, as unwitty, hearken not what we say. Soothly, great despite we do to God, when we pray Him to hear our prayer, and we will not hear it ourselves, but, what is worse, in foul thoughts and idle, waste our time. Abraham, when he made sacrifice to God, fowls lighted thereon, and would have defiled it, and he chased the fowls away, that none durst come nigh it, until all the time were past, and the sacrifice made. Do we so with these fleeing thoughts, that defile the sacrifice of our prayer. This sacrifice is full agreeable to God, when it comes of a clean and loving heart. God bids: "send to Me prayer and I shall send to thee

grace; and whatso thou dost for Me, I forget it not."

The fourth that lets our prayers to be heard, is hardness of heart, and that is on two manners: first hardness of heart against the poor, and thereby the prophet says: *Qui opturat aures s(uas) ad clamorem pauperis: clamabit & ipse & non exaudietur.* (Who shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he will call and I will not hear him.) That other is the hardness of them that will not forgive to them who have misdone them: to such-like, Solomon says: *Relinque proximo tuo nocenti te, & tunc deprecanti tibi, peccata soluuntur.* (Forgive thy neighbour who hurt thee, and then praying for thyself, thy sins shall be forgiven.) And the Gospel says: *Cum stabitis ad orandum: dimitte siquid habetis aduersum aliquem, vt pater vester qui in celis est dimittis vobis p(eccata) v(estra).* (When thou standest at prayer, forgive if thou hast ought against another, and your Father Who is in heaven shall forgive your sins.)

The fifth that lets our prayer to be heard, is little yearning after the things men pray for: and S. Austin says: *vt ex toto corde desideretur, hoc seruat tibi deus; quod non vult tibi cito dare, vt discas magna magne desiderare.* (That with the whole heart it may be desired, God stores this up for thee: for He wills not to give to thee quickly, that thou mayst learn greatly to desire great things.) And S. Gregory says: "if we with mouth will pray after the bliss of heaven, and yearn not (for) it with the heart, we are crying still."

The sixth that lets our prayer, is foul speech and idle, that we defile our lips with; for if thou give a great lord drink in a slutty cup, were the drink never so good, he would feel disgust therewith, and bid do it away, thirst he never so sore: so God does with a prayer that comes of a foul mouth: He esteems not thereof, but turns Him therefrom. Therefore, says S. Gregory: *Os nostrum a deo tanto minus auditur in precc: quanto plus polluitur stulta loqucione.* (Our

mouth is so much the less heard by God in prayer as it is more defiled by foolish talking.) The sixth, what might and virtue prayer is of? Men that were before this time, that held them (selves) in soothfastness, and spake not idle (things), won from God what they so prayed (for); and that was shewn to a holy hermit called Florentius, that dwelt in a wilderness unknown of men. So much vermin was about this hermit's place, that none durst come thither by a long way. A deacon was in that land, that heard of this hermit, and came at the last to the place where the hermit was dwelling; but so much vermin he saw thereabout that he durst come no nearer, but cried after help from afar. The holy man came out to know what it was that cried, and he saw a man standing there and he speered[6] what he wished. And the deacon said: "Holy Father, I have sought thee from far, and now I have found thee. I have joy enough if I might come to thee. But I may not for these venomous beasts that are so many." When the holy man heard this, he prayed God that He would fordo[6a] those worms; and, as soon, a grisly storm rose with a thunder and slew all those worms. Then said the hermit to our Lord: "Lord, these beasts lie here so thick, that I may not come to him, nor he to me, lest we be envenomed of them. Lo Lord! they lie here dead, but who shall lift them away?" At this word, many fowls came and bare them clean away. Hereof speaks S. Gregory, and says: "Because God's servants withdraw them from the world and its works, they cannot speak uselessly; so they bind them to silence, that they dare say no word save it be teaching to others, or praising to God; and therefore when they asked God aught He granted them at once. But we, woeful wretches, who deal with the world, that all day chatter as pies, now lie, now twist, now speak evil, now quarrel, now backbite, now swear great oaths. These defile our prayer and let its being heard; for our mouth, and praying, is as far from

[6] Inquired. [6a] Destroy.

God, as it is near the world, with idle speech." Prayer is so mightful, if it have its rights, that it masters the fiend, and lets him from doing his will. For so it did the fiend that Julian, the Emperor, commanded to wend to the outer side of the world, to bring him tidings how it was there. When he had flown ten days' journey thitherward, he came over the place that Publius the hermit dwelled in, who was praying at that time. And his prayer overtook the fiend and held him there fast, fully ten days—for all that time, the hermit was in prayer: and when he ceased, the fiend turned again, for he might no further wend, for prayer letted him.

When thou hast gathered home thy heart with its wits, and hast destroyed those things that might let thee from praying, and won to devotion that God sends to thee through his dear-worthy grace, quickly rise from thy bed at the bell-ringing. And if no bell be there, let cock be thy bell: if there be neither cock nor bell, let God's love waken thee, for that satisfies God most. And zeal (?) rooted in love wakens before both cock and bell, and has washed her face with sweet love-tears, and her soul within has joy in God with devotion and liking, and morning-greeting Him, and with other heavenly gladdings that God sends to His lovers. Blessed are they before all others, for many gladdings they have when others sleep fast; for they find before them, rise they never so soon, what glads everything, for God says thus: *Qui mane vigilauerint ad me; inuenient me:* ("he that early wakens to Me, he shall find Me to speak with him, and glad him with Me, and have Me at his will"). Be then ever a waker, and rise quickly, and thank heartily thy Lord God for the rest thou hadst, for the caring of the angels. Since a knight has great liking to be called to come speak to the King when he knows it is for his great profit, with greater skill[7] God's knight, that is, every Christian man, at the calling of his Lord, ought ready to be, that calls

[7] Reason.

him for his great profit and for nothing else. Soberly rise thou with a good cheer, and think thou hearest God call thee with these words: *Surge prop(er)a amica mea, formosa mea, & veni: ostende michi faciem tuam, sonet vox tua in auribus meis:* that is, ("Rise My love, My fair thing and show Me thy face: I yearn that the voice of thy prayer ring in Mine ear.") Think, in thy rising, how many men perished in life, and some in soul, and some in body and soul: some burnt, some drowned, some suddenly dead without repentance or shrift, and their souls drawn by fiends to hell; some fallen into deadly sin, as lechery, gluttony, theft, covetousness, manslaughter and other sore sins. And from all these perils, thy good God has delivered thee, of His goodness and not of thy desert. What hast thou done to God that He should care so for thee, and suffer so many others to be lost? —and peradventure thou hast done worse than they have done. If thou well look what God does to thee though thou hast not served, thou mayest find that God is as busy to do thee profit, as (if) He had nought else to do, and as if He had forgotten this world, and only thought on thee. When thou hast thus thought, lift up thy heart to God and say: "I thank Thee dear-worthy Lord, with all my heart, Who thus hast cared this night (for) me, so unworthy a wretch, and suffered me (to have) life and health, and thus (to) abide this day, I thank Thee, Lord, for this good and for many others that Thou hast done me, so unkind and unworthy a wretch beyond all others; that Thou shewest me such kindness in spite of my evil deeds." And put thee, and all thy friends in God's Hands, and say thus: "Into Thy dear-worthy Hands, my Lord, I yield my soul and body and all my friends, kin and stranger, and all that have done me good bodily or ghostly, and all that Christendom has taken: that Thou, for love of Thy Mother, that dear-worthy Maiden, and (for) the beseeching of all Thy Hallows, keep us this day, or this night, from all perils of body and soul, and from

all deadly sins, from tempting of the fiend, and from sudden death, and from the pains of hell, and make us to dread them. Do Thou hallow our hearts with the grace of Thy Holy Ghost, and make us here, whatever we do, that we do Thy will, that we never separate from Thee, dear Lord. Amen." When thou hast thus done, wend to the church or oratory; and if thou mayst win to none, make thy chamber thy church. In the church is most devotion to pray, for there, God is on the altar, to hear (him) that to Him prays, and grant them what they ask or what is better: and in presence of Hallows, and in worship of (in?) churches that are hallowed, protection of angels that are there to serve thy Lord and thee —for their office is to receive thy prayer, and bear it to God, and bring thee grace from Him, as S. Bernard says, Rise then quickly at God's call, and put from thee all heaviness, and answer thy Lord with the words that Samuel said to God, Who called him by night: *Loquere domine, quia audit seruus tuus.* (Speak, Lord, for Thy servant hears.)

For eight things, we ought to wake us, and ever be doing good: this short life; the strait way we have to go; our good deeds that are so few; our sins that are so many; death that we are sure of and wot not when; the strait doom of Domesday and so hard, for each idle thought shall there be showed, then shall each foul word and sinful work be greatly charged, for God says: *De omni verbo ocioso, &c.:* (For every careless word, etc.): and S. Anselm, *Quid facies in illa die quando exigetur a te omne tempus tibi impensum: qualiter a te sit expensum, vsque ad minimam cogitacionem?* (What wilt thou do in that day when all the time entrusted to thee is required of thee, how thou hast expended it, even to the smallest thought?) The seventh thing is the strong torment of hell, the eighth is the joy of heaven.

After thine uprising, pray for the souls that are in the torment of purgatory, and think thou hearest them

cry on thee, the words of Job: *Miseremini mei, miseremine mei vos (saltem) a (mici) mei; quia m(anus) d(omini) t(eligit) me;*[8] and help them with *De profundis* and *Absolue.* After, do thou greet our Lady with *Salue regina,* on thy knees. Wend then to the church, and bid thy vain thoughts and business of the world hold themselves without; and say to thy soul at thy in-coming: *Intra in gau(dium) domini tui, vt audias vo(cem) eius: & vi(deas) templum eius:* (Enter into the joy of thy Lord that thou mayest hear His voice and see His temple.) Holy Church is the entry and gate of Heaven. After, fall down before the cross, and honour Him because for thee He was done on the cross, and say: *Adoramus te Christe, & vene (dicimus) tibi, quia per sanctam crucem t(uam) re (demisti) m(undum).* (We adore Thee, O Christ, and bless Thee, because by Thy holy cross Thou hast redeemed the world.) And have then, before thou dost uprise, in thy mind how hotly love burned Him, Who died for thee on the cross. After, begin thy matins; but firstly, cross thy lips and say: *Domine, labia m(ea) a(peries);* that is, "Lord, open my lips that all night have been shut from praising Thee; and I cannot open them, unless Thou help me." And then say: *Deus in adiutorium;* with these words get out thine heart before God and say: "Lord, as my Doomsman, before Thee I stand; avenge Thou me of my foes that let me from serving Thee: and they assail me keenly, so that I (shall) be soon overcome unless Thou help me." And at *Gloria patri,* bow down and say with thine heart, "Lord, for Thy blessing, I beseech Thee." Turn thee then to the angels that stand about to thy comfort and help, and as thy wardens to keep thee from thy foes, and thus to them say: *Venite exultemus domino.* (Come, let us praise the Lord with joy.) After, cast thine eye on somewhat and hold it thereon till thou

[8] "Have mercy on me, have mercy on me, ye, at least, my friends: because the Hand of the Lord touched me." Job xxi. 19. The Vulgate prints *saltem vos.*

makest thy prayers; for this helps much to the stabling of thine heart: and paint there thy Lord as He was on the cross: think on His feet and hands that were nailed to the tree; and on the wide wound in His side, through the which way is made for thee to win to His Heart. Thank thy Lord thereof, and love Him therefor; for there they find treasure of love that may win thereto. Think thou seest His wounds streaming with blood and falling down on the earth: and fall thou down and lick up that blood, sweetly, with tears, kissing the earth, with the remembrance of that rich treasure that for thy sins was shed: and say thus with thine heart: "Why lies this blood here as lost and I perish for thirst? Why drink I not of this rich piment,[9] that my Lord to me pours out, and cool my tongue, and hear what God to me speaks: *Qui sitit, veniat & bibat. Gustabis & videbis quam suavis est dominus, quam dulcis, quam mitis, quam misericors.* (Let him who thirsts come and drink. Taste and see how pleasant is the Lord, how gentle, how merciful.) With such-like meditations, angels come to the soul: and God is there and says to

[9] *Spiced wine.* Dr. Furnivall *(Early English Meals and Manners,* p. 87*)*, quotes from p. 238 of Henderson's *History of Ancient and Modern Wines:—*

> "In order to cover the harshness and acidity common to the greater part of the wines of this period, and to give them an agreeable flavour, it was not unusual to mix honey and spices with them. Thus compounded, they passed under the generic name of *piments*, probably because they were originally prepared by the *pigmentarii*, or apothecaries; and they were used much in the same manner as the *liqueur* of modern times."

Hippocras, in mediæval days, was one of the most popular of these "piments"; for it, John Russell, in his *Boke of Nurture*, gives a recipe:* one of his injunctions was doubtless faithfully obeyed:—

> "Thus, son, shalt thou make perfect Hippocras, as I say,
> But with thy mouth to prove it, be thou tasting alway."

* *Boke of Nurture* ll. 121—176. Printed in Dr. Furnivall's edition (Early English Text Society) of *Early English Meals and Manners,* pp. 9—12.

His lover: *Quid vis vt faciam tibi?* (What wilt thou that I should do for thee?) And thou answerest: "Lord, it is enough for me, sinful wretch and outcast from Thy folk, that Thou, Lord, wilt look over to me, and suffer me, Lord, so sinful wretch, to praise Thee and to love Thee if I could, for so I well ought." If thou canst win to such-like thinkings in thy prayers, thou shalt have such-like gladdings that it shall be a pain to thee to think (of) aught else. S. Bernard, for the liking that he had of such-like stirrings, yearned that matins-time might have lasted till Domesday. Think, where thou standest or kneelest in prayer, that thou seest Jesus Christ come with angels and holy hallows, on each side, and angels bearing before Him baskets full of fragments left from the feast of the hallows that dwell with God in heaven, that God bade be gathered up to help the poor with, that it be not lost. These fragments are meat to us, poor wretches, that should perish in default; but God had ruth on us. Think thou hearest God cry: "Whoso hath need of meat, put forth thy hand and have." And bow thou thine head to God, and set forth thy poverty to Him and say: *Non est in domo mea panis;* (There is no bread in my house;) and say also; "Lord, so long meatless have I been, I die for hunger unless Thou hast ruth on me: and nought can keep my life but the meat that Thou dost deal out." Stir thyself in such-like remembrances, and others that may kindle thy devotion, and raise it to Him aye, till thou think thou hearest Him say to thee: *Dilata os t(uum) & im(plebo)illud.* (Open thy mouth, and I will fill it.) And then shalt thou, through God's grace, feel some part of that heavenly food that feeds all hallows: that thou mayst with liking sing the Maiden's Song, that is God's Mother: *Magnificat anima mea dominum; et exultauit s(piritus) m(eus) in deo s(alutari) m(eo).* (My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.) When God sends thee such-like likings through His grace, turn thee kindly

to the angels that stand before thee, and to them say: "I pray you, as my keepers, that God has sent to me, that ye thank your good Lord for me." And turn thee then to the altar, where God soothly is, and say: *Vere domine, magna est misericordia tua super me;* that is, "Soothly, Lord, great is Thy mercy that Thou to me shewest." With such-like love-stirrings, God comes to His lovers, and bids thee not that prayer be made, but presses in, in the midst, and softens the languishing soul, with a dewing of heavenly sweetness. And tears and sighings are messengers of God's coming. Happy are they that thus mourn and languish to God, for they shall never separate from God, but have Him at their will.

How God comes to His lovers, and how He sometimes from them parts.[10] God, when He comes to His lovers, He gives them to taste how sweet He is, and ere they may fully feel He from them wends, and as an eagle He spreads His wings and above them rises, as if He said: "Some part may ye feel how sweet I am: but if ye will feel this sweetness to the full, fly up after Me, and lift your hearts up to Me, where I am sitting on my Father's Right Hand, and then shall ye be full filled in joy of Me." God comes to His lovers to comfort them: He parts from them that they should the more meek themselves; and that they should not over much pride themselves of the gladding they have of His coming. For if thy Spouse were aye with thee thou wouldest impute it to nature and not to grace. Therefore, through His grace, He comes when He will; and to whom He will:[11] and departs when He will, so that His long dwelling make Him not the more unworth-ful; but after His departing, He be the more yearned for, and sought with zealous love, sighings and tears. But, God's lover, be thou ware, though thy

[10] This is the passage which Miss Allen refers to as causing her to doubt Rolle's authorship of *Our Daily Work*. Comment on her objection will be found in the next chapter.

[11] Cf. *In. Amoris*, ch. ii. last paragraph.

Spouse withdraw Him from thee awhile, He sees all thy deeds, and thou mayst nothing from Him hide. And if He wit thou love any but Him, unless it be for the love of Him, or if thou make any love-semblance to other than Him, so soon He parts from thee. Jealous is thy Spouse, delicate, noble and rich: seven times brighter than the sun: in fairness and might all others He surpasses, and whatso He wills is done, in heaven, in earth and in hell. If He see any touch of filth in him that should be His lover, He turns Him from him soon, for uncleanness may He see none. Therefore be thou chaste, shame-full and mild of heart, and with love-longing yearn for Him above all things. And when God withdraws His heavenly likings and sweetings from thee, as sometimes is necessary in this deadly life, give thee not to fleshly lusts and likings of this world, but to prayer and meditations, reading of Holy Writ, or honest working: and ever mourn thou after thy Love as a young child misses his mother. For those that, after such-like knowing of God and tasting of His sweetness turn Him the back, and give themselves to sin, have no defence against God for their sin. An unhappy chance and care-full it is to leave the fellowship of God and His angels and hallows, and serve the fiend and follow his counsel with lusts and likings and works of sin. That heart that was hallowed through the Holy Ghost to be God's temple, that was raised here, above his nature, for to have heavenly likings and mirths with God, all soon with foul thoughts makes it loathsome and foul: those ears that heard those words that to none is it allowable to speak, open themselves to hear back-bitings, and leasings and other idle speech: the eyes that right now were baptised with tears open themselves to see vanities: that tongue that right now spoke to God with prayer, all soon after with that tongue curses, forswears, backbites and speaks foul words. Pray we to God for His goodness that He keep us from these vices. Of God's coming may men know, by this that S. Bernard says: "When

thou art stirred of man without, or within of spirit for to care for rightwiseness, and to stand there-for; to be meek and patient, to love thy brother in God, to be buxom to thy superiors;[12] to love chastity and cleanness in body and soul: a token it is that Almighty God comes to visit thy soul." If thou take godly chastening from thy friend for thy sin, or words that stir thee to virtues and good manners, this makes a way (for) and token (of) God's coming. Then if thou put from thee slowness and heaviness, and with a love-yearning like such-like words, then dear-worthy God thy Lord hastes Him to thee; for the yearning that God has to thee kindles thy yearnings to have liking in such-like words, and makes thee bitterly repent thy sin and amend thy life. For, at His incoming, He wakens the soul, stirs it, softens it, washes its wounds with wine and softens them with oil: that is, stirs it bitterly to repent what it has mis-done, and softens it with the hope of mercy and forgiveness of sins. He rives sin up by the roots, as a gardener does the evil weeds, and grafts in that soul virtues and good manners. What was dry, he dews it with grace: what was black and murky he makes it white; what was bound He looses; what was cold He makes warm with love. By these stirrings thou mayst know thy Lord comes; by stirring of thy heart, repenting of vices, withdrawing from lusts, amending of life, repenting of misdeeds, beginning of a new man in God, each day more and more. And by this thou mayst know when He wends from thee;—thy gladding wanes; slow dost thou wax and dry and heavy as a stone; love cools in thee like a pot that had boiled, and the fire was with-

[12] *Ouerlyngs.* This is not a very common word. Rolle uses it in Psalm lxv. 10. "Thou dost lead us into the snare of passibility, so that whether we willed or we willed not, we suffer great wretchedness that snares us on each side; and Thou dost set tribulations on our back, to make us bend down to meekness. And Thou dost set men over our heads: therefore we suffer our over-lings that are known (to be) worse than we."

drawn therefrom. But then the soul needs to mourn sorely aye till He come again. If foul thoughts egg thee on to leave thy good God, say thus: *Cuius est ymago hec & suprascriptio?* (Whose is this image and superscription?) If he say, *Caesaris* (Cæsar's) that is, the prince of this world, it is the fiend of hell. Say to him: "Wend away again; thou foul fiend, with thy false money; bear it again with thee to hell, for my gates are shut, and my Lord dwells herein, therefore have I no leisure to deal with thee."

Think on that holy greeting that Gabriel made to that Maiden Mary in Nazareth; how joyful she was in body and soul in that time: through that greeting, with (her) assent (to it), she was full-filled with grace (so) that she won might and power in heaven and earth and hell: and upon her hangs all this world's health, and the restoring of those that fell. Think on the birth of her Child; how she bore Him without the sorrow and pain that all other women have naturally in time of birth, and she clean maiden after. Think when He was born, they laid Him in a crib before an ox and an ass; other cradle had He none. None was there to serve Him with light of torches, as men do before great lords; therefore, came a fire from Heaven and lighted the house He was in, and Bethlehem, and angels came from heaven to sing the Child asleep with a merry steven.[13]

Think how three Kings came from far lands through guiding from a star, and offered Him gold, incense and myrrh: think how sweetly the Child on them smiled; and with His lovely eyes sweetly on them looked. Think how poorly His Mother was clad when the Kings before her kneeled; for, on her, she had but a white smock, as these clerks say; more to cover her than for showing of pride. Think how His Mother came with Him to the Temple to make the offering of

[13] Voice. This is like Rolle's way of riming the end of a prose paragraph; or occasionally riming within one, as in the next.

cleansing, and bowed to fulfil the Law as if they were sinful. Think (how) the old priest Simeon took the Child in his arms and blessed God; for there, through stirrings of the Holy Ghost, he saw the Saviour of all this world between his hands; and prayed that he might pass out of this world,—" for mine eyes see Him that shall save the folk." Think of that sorrow that His Mother had when she missed Him and sought Him three days, and then found Him among the Masters, hearing and speering into points of the Law. Think how He came to be christened of S. John; how the Holy Ghost lighted there on Him in likeness of a dove; the Father, therewith, with voice recorded that He was His Son. Think how He hallowed wedlock in the architriclin's[14] house, and there, to show that He was Almighty God, changed water into wine. In wilderness, how He fasted forty days without meat; how He overcame the fiend that tempted him with three: with gluttony and covetousness and vain-glory. And of the wonder men had of His preaching, for all the words He to them spake were full of grace. How he healed the sick, raised the dead, gave the blind sight, the dumb speech, the lepers healing with touching of His Hands; and many other sicknesses that were incurable in their nature. How He, weary with great ganging, rested Him at the well; and there He bade give Him water to drink for He thirsted sore. Afterwards, open thine heart with sore sighings and think on the Passion and torments that Jesus Christ suffered as they are written before on the xviii. leaf.[15]

[14] The Governor of the Feast.

[15] *The Meditation on the Passion* is on the eighteenth leaf of the MS. Arundel; and it contains a quotation from "Richard Hermit." This reference here might suggest that Rolle did not write *Our Daily Work*. But we have to remember that in both the MS. Arundel and MS. Thornton, we have only copies. The original MS. of *Our Daily Work* has not been found. Whether Rolle made the reference and the copyist followed, or whether the latter interpolated the reference, as exegesis, in his copy, we cannot, at present, determine.

He may beseech God for grace, and securely trust to speed, who here stirs himself up to good works, and with devotions and affections so powders them that they may be savoury to his dear Lord. *Works* of penance, as fasting, waking, hard-wearing,[16] forbearing from fleshly lusts, alms-deeds and other such-like, as we do with devotion and affection to God, (it) behoves be so done that they be done with a glad heart, and with freedom of spirit. Devotion is a worthy treasure,[17] that God sends to the heart to glad it with: but unworthy is he to have this gift that will make no dwelling-place in his heart for it. We seek what is above us with our faith; but it savours us not, for we are so full of earth that we have lost our taste.

Why do so many men feel the stirrings the fiend forges and suffer their enemy so often to over-cast them? I see that naught makes this save wanting of grace. Among all others, I trow we grieve God most for that we will not swink to win this grace from God: and God promises this grace to all that will seek it, (provided) that their vessel be clean and void to re-

[16] A hair-shirt, or a chain, e.g.

[17] *drurie,* a somewhat uncommon word, derived from Old French, meaning *gallantry* or *special friendship.* In *The Pricke of Conscience* (Bk. VII. l. 7825) it occurs in the writer's description of heaven's joys:—

"Thare es alkyn druryes and rychesce."
(There are all kinds (of) gallantries and riches.)

The word occurs in some Old English Homilies of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: in *Floriz and Blanchefleur* (c. 1275) and in Langland *(Passus* I. l. 87), where "Holicherche" speaks of *Truth:*

"It is as derworth a drewery as dere god him-selven,"

and in *The Romaunt of the Rose,* where Chaucer uses it in the sense of mistress. The word occurs more than once, in *Ego Dormio,* no one disputes Rolle's authorship of that: the phrases are: *delites & drewryse stynk sal ful sone;* again *many kirtils, many dreurise.* In the first, *gallantries,* in the second *treasures,* probably render the sense rightly. Rolle uses it a third time, at the end of *Ego Dormio, Jhesu my dere & my drewry:* which might be rendered, Jesus my Dear and my Gallant, or Jesus my Dear, my Treasury.

ceive it in. But S. Bernard says: "That heart that is charged with covetousness of the world, it can have none of devotion or affection in God; for soothfastness and vanity;[18] lasting things and failings, ghostly things and bodily can not be together at any time." So worthy (a) thing is the comfort of God, that it will not rest in that breast where other comfort is. So delicious is liking in Him, that with no other liking may it accord. Whoso yearns (for) other comfort to glad him with, he witnesses against himself that he withstands God's grace: but it is honest comfort, betimes, to glad his nature with, that he may thereby serve God better.

After thou hast spent thy time in prayers and holy thoughts and good works, in holy fear of God, prepare thyself to meat, to strengthen thy nature, which would fail thee else. And to this intent shall every Christian man his body feed and clothe, that it may the better serve his Lord, in whatsoever he does. With mourning, soberness and measure shalt thou wend to thy meat: have care in thy meat-time, and after meat make thou praising to thy Lord, Who has fed thee, and also before meat, and for all the good deeds that He to thee has done. First, ere thou go to meat, thou shalt mourn, as holy Job did, that thus says: *Antequam comedam: suspiro,* that is "before I eat, I sigh"; for my nature is made weak and feeble for Adam's sin: and every day needs bodily meat, to uphold the nature that else would fail in a little time. And, as it tells in the *Life of the Holy Fathers,* Isidorus, that holy man, when he ate, he wept sore and said: "My self shames me: for I live by beastly meat as other beasts do that, by nature, have no skill:[19] and I, God's skill-full creature, made like to Himself, that should have dwelt in Paradise, and there have been fed with heavenly food." When thou findest delight or savour in meat or drink, think on the heavenly food that feeds all hallows, that surpasses all pleasures: and we be never full-filled ere

[18] In the sense of *emptiness.*
[19] Reason.

we thereof feel. Men of religion hear lessons of holy men's lives at their meat, so that as the body is fed with bodily food, so the soul be fed with holy words. Man's body is as a burning furnace, and specially of the young: and delicious and hot meats and drinks make this fire burn hotter: therefore says S. John: "plenty in youth is double fire." Therefore, all that kindles sin in the flesh is to be fled. The wise man says: "If thou wilt abate the flame, lessen the brands." And S. John says: "flesh-meat and wine are the kindling of fleshly stirrings." And S. Austin: "the flesh is as a wild colt, which is to be tamed with bridle and hunger." And Solomon: "Rod and burden fall to the ass"; which betokens our flesh. Wisely should a man take note of the flesh that comes before him, and take of it in such measure that it injures him not; but that he, through it, serve God the better. Therefore, S. John bids: "Ever when thou eatest, ever (see?) that thou hunger; that after meat thou mayst read and pray and serve God better." Holy men that have been before us used coarse meat and sharp; more to abate hunger than for any pleasure. Some lived on grass, some on roots, some on spices and herbs and fruits that the earth bore: and in whatsoever they ate, they destroyed all savour that might stir to lust. Also, S. Germanus mingled ashes with his bread, that he should have no pleasure in his meat-time. Other sauce than hunger took they none. S. Gregory says: "bread made of bran and water, with cabbage or other simple pottage is good food to the well-taught stomach, with sauce of God's love if ye have it therewith: without this sauce no sustenance man uses has savour." Some ate no meat before the night: some, only every other day: some fasted three days together. Macarius fasted all Lent-tide except the Sundays; and ate naught but raw leaves. Some took no keep when they ate nor what they ate; flesh or fish all tasted to them alike, so that afterwards they wist not what they ate. Some, when they were set to meat, and meat was brought before

them, they forgot to eat; for they so spent the day and the night in holy speech that they thought of naught else to the undern-tide[20] of the second day; so that their brethren came to them and asked why they would not eat: and then first thought they of meat, and they ate then, as they thought good, in God's holy dread. When thou art set to thy meat, make before thee, on the board, a cross with five crumbs, to stir thee to think on Him Who died for thee on the cross: and think, "Here lies His Head that was crowned with thorns; there His Hands, there His Feet that were nailed full fast; there was His sweet Side that was opened with a spear, from which came both blood and water, to heal my unclean wounds." When thou hast so done, if thou mayst, so far forth, take part of thy bread and of thy fish, and lay it by its lone, and say thus, still-y in thine heart, to God thy Lord: "Lord, what wilt Thou give me for this pittance that I make to Thee? How many tears, how many love-longings and desires for Thee? How many comforts of the Holy Ghost? How many stirrings to God, how many lookings toward me of Thy lovely eyes? Lord, wilt Thou for this meat that the poor hungry man shall have for Thy sake, give me love of Thee?"

When thou hast eaten what seems thee good, praise thy Lord Who has fed thee. After meat, be thou honest;[21] and keep thee from great talking and idle games; and hold thy wits inward under the fear of God. It is seemly to man and satisfies God, that his bearing should be more honest and temperate after meat than before; that no token of excess be seen in him, so that the flesh may better serve the soul in reading, in praying, and in other ghostly works, that may help to goodness. Thine even-song say with the devotion that God sends thee; in church or oratory where thou mayst best say it (free) from the noise and throng of the world. After, if thou needest, go sup,

[20] 9 a.m. to noon.
[21] Seemly. Cf. Fr. honnête.

and short be thy supper-time: in measure take thou meat and drink, so that it be no charge nor burden to thy nature; no hindering from serving thy Lord, nor, in time of rest, reive from thee thy sleep; nor that with foul temptation in thy sleep the fiend fill thee, as he oft does with those who go with a full stomach to bed. Let each man, as S. John says, "eat according to his strength and age; as his body is greater or less, hale or sick; let him take what he needs for the sustenance of his nature, and not as lust asks."

After supper, go to Church, or to some other place, where thou mayst be most at rest, and there say thy Compline; for, at this time, as S. Ambrose says: "fowls in their speech praise their Lord, and thank Him after their kind, for the good things He has done for them." Call thou then on thy God, and say: *Converte nos deus sal(utaris) noster:* (Turn us, O God of our salvation), as if he said, "Lord, I have been this day provoked by the world that has greatly letted me from serving Thee: through the temptation of the fiend or of my flesh, oft, this day, have I done amiss: therefore, Lord, turn me now from the world, and from all that may hinder me from praising Thee with a pure heart and all my wits, so that they be directed to Thee, to work Thy will." And then, say forth thy Compline, and after other prayers with devotion that God sends thee. And after, ere thou go to bed, hold a chapter[22] with thine heart, and ask it in what thing it is better than it was. Hast thou shriven thee yet of that sin that thou didst then and there? of those words that thou spakest there? of that evil will thou wast in then? of that wrong thou didst then and said to him? of that scuffling, of that blame, of that foul thought, of that thing thou didst leave undone that thou shouldest have done? and art thou willing to leave such vices? What temptations didst thou withstand this day? In what art thou meeker than thou wast? in what more chaste, more sober, more enduring, more temper-

[22] Conference.

ate, more loving God in thy brother, or (what) more liking in God hast thou than thou hadst? Hast thou left that sin thou through habit fell into so often? and the many other vices thou hast practised and satisfied the fiend with and grieved thy good God, and hast barred thyself out from grace that should help thee? And then, with a repenting of those sins that bite thy inwit,[23] knock on thy breast, and say a *Pater noster*, with an *Ave Maria* on thy knees: and soon in the morning shrive thee of those sins. And if thou dost thus, I hope that the fiend shall be afeared to tempt thee; for thou art under God's ward, whilst thou bearest thyself thus. After this reckoning up, wherethrough thy soul is raised in a happy hope to the Father of mercy, and thy flesh waxes heavy, go to thy rest; for if thou lettest thy flesh of what it needs, and dost travail it beyond its might, faintly will it help thee, or withal hinder.

And, ere thou goest to rest, commit thyself and all thy friends into God's hands, Who for us was nailed to the tree, and beseech Him, of His mercy, that He will guard thee from all perils of body and soul and arm thee with the token of the cross: for when the fiend sees His mark, he quickly flees. Of this mark, it is written in *the Life* of S. Edmund,[24] that as he went one time alone, a child appeared to him that was wondrous fair, and said: "Hail! my friend, whom I love in God." S. Edmund was astonished by this greeting, and the child said to him, "Knowest thou me not?" And S. Edmund said to the child, "How should I know thee?—I saw thee never before." Then the child said, "When thou didst learn in school, I sat aye by thy side: and ever since I have been with thee, wheresoever thou hast dwelt, for so my Lord has fastened me with thee, that I could never part from thee, such is my Lord's will. But behold on my forehead, and read what thou seest there." He looked, as

[23] Conscience.

[24] Concerning the power of the Cross, shown to S. Edmund (marginal note).

he bade him, and in heavenly letters he saw there written; *Jhesus nazarenus, Rex iudeorum:* (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews). Then said the child: "This is my Lord's Name that thou seest thus written. This Name I will that thou have it in mind, and print it on thy soul, and cross thy forehead with this name, ere thou go to sleep; and from harassings of the fiend it shall guard thee that night, and from sudden death and all others who by night cross themselves therewith." And when he had said these words he vanished away. Bear some holy thoughts to bed with thee, and say thy prayers till sleep fall on thee. To have sleep soft and sweet, measure and soberness of meat and drink is a sovereign help; with remembrance of God's Law, and of Holy Writ, as God says through the prophet: *Custode legem meam & consilium meum: et si dormieris, non timebis; quiesces: et suauis erit sompnus tuus.* (Keep My Law and My Counsel; and if thou sleepest thou shalt not be afraid; rest and thy sleep shall be sweet.)

And ever, as thou dost wake, lift thy heart to God with some holy thought, and rise and pray to thy Lord that He will grant to the dead release from pains; and grace and life without end to the quick. If temptation of lust tempt thee in bed, think that thy good Lord hung on the rood for thee; think upon His five wounds that down-streamed with blood; think that His bed was the hard knotty tree; and instead of a pillow, He had a crown of thorns. And say then with sore sighing to cool thy lust; "My dear-worthy Lord for me hanged on the rood, and I lie in this soft bed, and welter in sin like a foul swine that loves naught but filth. Rise then betimes, and hold (thyself) with prayers and love-sighings and tears."

Of three points, beware. The first, that those devotions that thou hast through grace stirring (thee), be not known to others: hide them so far as thou mayst, with will and deed, for fear of vain-glory. The second, that thou think not that it is in thy might to have such

devotions and stirrings aye when thou wilt; but only through God's grace, when He will send them. The third, that thou esteem not thyself over-well for such-like stirrings; nor think therefore thou art dear unto God; nor deem no other man unworthy, that does not as thou dost: but when thou hast done all well, think soothly by thyself and admit[25] it in words: "it is nothing worth, Lord, what I do: but I am but a worthless[26] thrall." If thou wilt lose no reward, judge no other: but thyself hold most unworthy; for if thou dost fast or pray more than another, perchance another passes thee in meekness and endurance and loving. Therefore, think of what lacks (to) thee, and not only of what thou hast. Nevertheless[27] God wills that thou think on those graces and benefits He has done thee, to stir thee to know thyself indebted to Him for them, and serve Him and love Him the more; or, if thou be in anguish, to glad thee with. Some-while it befalls that he whom men deem evil is better, in God's doom, than some that men deem good. Many are honest without and unclean within: some worldly and dissolute, and within holy and as God's friends. And some bear themselves like angels in men's sight, and in God's sight they stink like sinful wretches. And some to men's doom seem sinful, and are full dear to God Almighty; for their inward bearing is heavenly in God's bright sight.[28] Therefore, judge we none but

[25] Rolle's word is grant: a use that still lingers provincially.

[26] Unnaite.

[27] Noght-for-thi, used by Rolle in Ps. xxxviii. 8.

[28] The similarity of thought in this paragraph to a passage in ch. x. of Rolle's *Form of Perfect Living* is obvious:—

> "If thou speakest good and doest good men suppose that thou lovest good: therefore look well that thy thought be in God, or else thou deceivest thyself and deceivest men. Nothing that I do without proves that I love God.
>
> "For a wicked man might do as much penance in body, waking and fasting as I do. How then may I ween that I love, or hold myself better, on account of that which

our own self. And pray we for ourself and all others to Jesus Christ, Mary's Son, Who, for us, was nailed on the rood, that whoso is bound in deadly sin, He will loose them; and those that are in good life (that) He grant them (to) end therein. Two messengers are come to thee to tell thee tidings. That one is called "Dread" that comes from hell to warn thee of thy harm; that other is called "Hope," that comes from Heaven to tell thee of bliss thou shalt have, if thou do well. Dread says he saw in hell so many sinful be tormented, that if all the wits of men were in one, he might not tell them: "of gluttons, lustful, robbers, thieves. Rich men that harmed the poor, with their servants: Dooms-men that would not judge unless it were for reward: treasurers that supported wrong-doing by their subtlety: deemsters that damned leal men and delivered stark thieves: workmen who swink dishonestly and take full hire: cultivators that dishonestly tithe: Prelates having the cure of men's souls who neither chasten nor teach them: of all kinds of men that have wrongly wrought, there I saw that each one bitterly bought it. For there I saw want of all goodness, and plenty of torment and sorrow, such as, hot-fire aye burning; brimstone stinking; greedy devils, like dragons, gaping wide; hunger and thirst for ever lasting, adders and toads gnawing on the sinful. Such-like sorrow and yelling and gnashing of teeth I heard there, that being afeared I nearly lost my wit. Such-like mirkness there was that I could grip it: and so bitter was the smoke that it made the woeful wretches

any man may do? Certainly, my heart, whether it loves my God or not, wots none but God, for nought that they may see me do." This is no isolated passage; earlier, in ch. x., Rolle wrote bluntly:—

"Many speak good and do good and love not God: as hypocrites, who suffer great penance, and seem holy in men's sight."

No one challenges his authorship of *The Form of Perfect Living*.

greet[29] glowing tears: and bitterly I heard them ban the time they were born in. Now they yearn to die, and they cannot die: death which sometime they hated they were liefer have now than all the goods of this world. And therefore I warn thee that unless thou amend thee of thy sins with shrift and penance, and have a steadfast will to leave them for ever, a seat I saw made in hell for thee, of burning fire, where devils shall torment thee without end." That other messenger that is called Hope says he is come from heaven to tell thee of that untellable great joy that God's friends wield: "to tell thereof as it is, may no earthly man speak though his tongue were of steel. For there is a gracious fellowship of all God's friends, Orders of Angels and of Holy Hallows; and, above, God Almighty that glads them all. Of all goodness, I saw plenty, fairness and wealth that last aye; honour and power that never shall fail, and wisdom and love and aye-lasting joy. There I heard melody and song of bright angels. So worthy is that joy and great withal, that whoso might taste one blessed drop of it, he should be so ravished into loving of God, and he should have such-like yearning to win thither, that all this world's joy were pain to him. With so great a love he should be overtaken in yearning to win to that bliss, that by a hundred times it should more stir him to love virtue and flee sin than any fear he might have of the pain of hell. And I tell thee forsooth, that if thou wilt leave sin and do God's bidding and love Him as thou oughtest, a rich seat and a fair God has made for thee, wherein thou shalt dwell with Him without end."

Third part of the book.

The third and the last part of this book teaches a man so to bear himself, wheresoever he comes, and whatsoever he does, that it be praise to God and an example of good to all that see him: for the Apostle counsels

[29] Weep, shed.

thus: *Omnia in vobis honeste et secundum ordinem fiant;* that is, "all that ye do, honestly and orderly look that ye do it." Then, at the first let each lover of God look that he yearns not to mingle himself with the world, that hinders and deceives all who deal with it, and hinders them from many good (deeds) that they might do. And those men that will nowhere rest, but aye rake about, their eyes see many things that the eye sends to the heart; and thence they come not lightly that are there imprinted. S. Bernard complains of the harms that he felt in the world whilst he was therein, and says: *Mundus circumcinxit me & obsedit:* ("The world surrounds and besieges me"); that is, "the world has besieged me on every side, and through the gates of my five wits it shoots at me, and wounds me full sore, and through the wounds death presses in to slay my sorry soul. My eyes look, and my thought changes and kindles me into sin. Mine ears hear and my heart bows thereto; I smell with my nose and it pleases my thought. With my mouth I speak, and in speaking I find pleasure or other beguilement; and with a little over-soft feeling, lust kindles in my flesh; and the fiend, my foe that I cannot see, stands ever against me with his bow bent."

Therefore, if necessity stir a man to wend into the world, where are so many stirrings to sin, with great dread shall he wend as into a battle to fight against his foes. It needs he be well armed against the arrows of his foes that bitterly shoot at him; and he may dread them the more because he cannot see them: with foot-traps and snares the way is set full. Therefore, let him who shall wend out arm himself with God's holy fear. God warned His disciples to be wary in the world, when He said thus: "Soothly the world shall withstand you with sore temptations." Therefore, if thou needest to wend out for thine own profit, or that of others, colour not thy wending with any false hue, to feign thyself an occasion for dallying with the world for pleasure or profit (?), or to be

known before others with lords . . . .[30] and therefore they make a show with words, and feign as they can to be considered holy by all who see them; or they dally more than needs with the world as to buying and selling and jangling over worldly things. And all their outer bearing so matches the world, that they make what David says true: *Commixti sunt inter gentes, & didicerunt opera eorum:* that is, "they mingle themselves with the folk of the world, who have no knowledge of God; and such-like works as they see them do, such-like they work." Therefore, when thou needest to go forth, cross thee with the Holy Name of Jesus, Mary's Son Who died on the rood, for then thou art more secure, whithersoever thou goest; as S. Austin said to his brethren when they went forth. And S. John says: "Whithersoever thou goest, and whatsoever thou doest, mark thou thy forehead and thy breast with the cross, for there is no (other) mark the fiend so greatly dreads." Look that thine outer clothing be neither over-hideous nor over-curious, in shape nor hue. Keep thy limbs to their office that they were made for, nor cast thine eyes over everything like a child: flourish not thine hands, nor leap not with thy feet. When a man's heart is out of ward, the limbs sometime fail in their office. And as thou ordainest thine outer bearing in going forth, also see that within thou be devout, and specially in praying (to) and praising thy Lord. If in going out thou canst not rest while thou makest thy prayers, go the softlier. Many things let thee (when) travailing to pray: weariness of limbs; men whom he meets who speak to him; then the five wits fleet out of ward,—and then the devotion of him praying cools. When walking, thou hast said thy prayers that thou art bound to say, lift up thine heart to God, and pray to Him in thought with a happy mind: think on the good (things) God has done for thee and shall do if thou serve Him truly;

[30] The text is incomplete.

think on His biddings, and do them indeed according to thy might; for so God bids where He thus says: *Erunt verba hec que precipio tibi in corde tuo & enarrabis ea filiis, & meditaberis ea, sedens in domo tua, & ambulans in itinere, dormiens et consurgens.* (Let these words that I command to thee be in thine heart; recount them to thy children; meditate on them sitting in thine house; walking on thy journey, sleeping and rising.) Or, in travelling, tell fair tales to thy fellows, or somewhat from Holy Writ that may soften your way and glad you in God. And sometimes say the Seven Psalms for the quick and the dead, that God may give grace to the quick and rest to the dead. When thou comest to the town to ease thy body, seek there where thou mayst, according to thy state, most seemly dwell and in most peace, and where thou mayst profit most to thyself and to others. Let flesh-lust and vanity draw thee to no place: but speer where any be who most love God, and thither draw thou. Seek not where thou mayst be best fed, for there peradventure are many stirrings to sin. Harbour thee with no woman, unless thou hast for a long time known them to be good. When thou art come to the house thou shalt rest in, hold thy wits in ward in God's holy fear, so that thine outer bearing be so ruled with grace, that thou mayst stir all who see thee to God, and through God's grace destroy sin's mirkness, and so fulfil the teaching of God Who says thus: *Sic luceat lux v(estra) c(oram) h(ominibus) vt v(ideant) o(pera) v(estra) b(ona) & g(lorificent) p(atrem) v(estrum) qui in celis est.* (Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father Who is in heaven.) And S. Gregory's saying: *Neque valde laudabile est esse bonum cum bonis, set esse bonum cum malis: sicut enim grauioris culpe est inter bonus bonum non esse: sic immensi preconii est bonum inter malos extitisse.* (Neither is it greatly praiseworthy to be good with the good, but to be good with the evil: for even as it is of more heinous guilt not

to be good among the good, so is it of immense merit to have stood for good among the evil.)

Keep well thine eyes, when thou art come to harbour, from all things that can kindle sin, and make thine eyes a vanguard, as Job did, that said: *Pepigi fedus cum oculis meis: ne cogitarem de virgine.* (I make a covenant with mine eyes lest I should think upon a maid.) After sight, comes thought, and then after, deed. And therefore said the prophet Jeremiah: *Oculus meus depredatus est animam meam:* (Mine eye hath laid my soul waste). When so holy a prophet lamented over his eye-sight, sorely may another who oft sins therewith, complain. Augustine: *Impudicus oculus: impudici cordis est nuncius.* (Shameless eye is the ambassador of a shameless heart.) Gregory: *Non licet respici: quod non licet concupisci.* (It is not lawful to look on that which it is not lawful to desire.) David: *auerte oculos m(eos)ne vi(deant) va(nitatem).* (Turn away mine eyes that they see not vanity.) Look also that thou hear nothing that may stir thee to sin, as unclean words, backbiting, false dooms, great oaths, controversy, striving and other such-like vices. Also, at thy meat, bear thee in orderly fashion, and hold thyself in moderation; and seek after no dainties, but be satisfied with common meats. Consider thyself in speaking: to whom, what, when, how, of whom and where: and have thyself so orderly, that thou be not like other worldly men, but fulfil the Apostle's words: *Nolite conformari huic seculo, quia vestra conversatio in celis est:* (Be not conformed to this world, because your conversation is in heaven).

Though our body be in this world like a clod of earth, our spirit, that is bought with the dear-worthy blood of God Almighty, should be, by mind and will, in heaven; not soil it here with sin, as swine do in a ditch. And whatsoever thou dost, and wheresoever thou comest, do as the Apostle teaches: *Omnibus prebe te exemplum bonorum operum:* (Shew thyself to all men as an example of good works): for, by good

example, God is worshipped and praised, men are helped and taught and strengthened in their faith. Have thyself so that men who dwell by you may say of you what was said of the Apostles, Paul and Barnabas: *Dii similes facti hominibus: descenderunt ad nos:* that is, Gods in likeness of men are come down to us. *Deo gracies.*

CHAPTER III.

NOTES ON "OUR DAILY WORK."

(1) In MS. Thornton, the writer is dealing with mortals of all sorts and conditions.

(2) MS. Thornton does not separate *Our Daily Work* from the fragment *On Grace,* where, in the preceding paragraph, these words occur: "For grace is earnest money of that lasting joy that is to come, as the Apostle says: *Gracia Dei vita eterna;* 'God's grace,' he says, 'is as help and way to everlasting life.'"

The word here translated earnest-money, is *erlis* in MS. Arundel, *harls* in MS. Thornton. *Erles,* in the same sense, occurs in *Hali Meidenhad* (c. 1320).

(3) Make sure. This verb (vmbyluke) seems to be used only by Rolle. A form of it (umlooke) occurs in his *Psalter,* Psalm cxliv. 3, where it has the meaning of circumscribe, or lock up. In the Arundel MS. *loke* occurs in the parallel passage, meaning look, keep or observe, all of common Middle English use.

(4) *Bi* is the word in MS. Arundel, *by* in MS. Thornton. This is not the ordinary Middle English form; but in Rolle's *Psalter,* Psalm cxxix. 8, it is written "he shal bye israel."

(5) The MS. Thornton, with some repetition, and a somewhat more marked simplicity, often seems rather more characteristic of Rolle's usual manner than the MS. Arundel.

(6) Horstman notes Rolle's use of verbs ending in *is (iss).* In the Arundel MS. here we find *bigilis,* in the Thornton bygyles. In many sentences of the Arundel words ending in *is* occur, e.g., failis, glidis, harmis, wastis, etc.

(7) Psalm lxi. 11 (Vulg.). In his *Psalter,* Rolle numbers this verse 10. Miss Hope Allen, *(Works ascribed to Richard Rolle,* p. 463), suggests as his exegesis "is literally translated from the Lombard," with the exception that Rolle adds the words "make restitution," it may be a reference to John de Dalton. But, is it "a literal translation"? S. Augustine (in loco) on whom Rolle so often relies for help in explanation of the Psalms, stresses the need for reparation:— "Therefore, neither fraud nor robbery covet ye any longer, nor on those things which ye have set your hope: I have admonished, have foretold, saith this Idithun." The MS. Thornton attributes this counsel to Solomon. Similar warning occurs in Job xxxi. 24—28.

(8) Slipir, sleper: These words, meaning slippery, are not in Stratmann's Dictionary, nor in pertinent Middle English vocabularies. In *The Owl and the Nightingale* (probably thirteenth century) I. 956. slider occurs,—"thy wey is slider." In Anglo-Saxon, Bosworth found slipeg, slipor, slipur, all meaning slippy or slippery. In his *Psalter Commentary,* and if it be his, in his *Psalter,* in verse, in Psalms xvi., xvii. and xciii., where "slip" appears in the Authorised Version, Rolle uses "stirred." Slider is found in Chaucer.

(9) Horstman observes "The additions to Ar. do not improve the sense." Certainly, this particular passage is obscure, and not characteristic of Rolle's usual clarity.

(10) Rolle puts together part of Job xvi. 11, and 23: (Vulg.), apparently misreading or altering the first phrase in the second of these verses; *Ecce enim breves anni transeunt; et semitam per quam non revertar ambulo.*

(11) Wlatsome, the word used here meaning loathsome, is one of Rolle's words.

(12) Hindered.

(13) This is the verb *tillen,* to draw or entice. It is the same in MS. Thornton. It occurs once in Rolle's *Commentary on the Psalter,* xxiv. 2, "My foes shall not have mastery of me though they wait night and day to entice me to sin." And it is found once in *The Pricke of Conscience,* I. 1182, 1183,

"The world, he says, tyl hym drawes
And tilles, and lufes tham, that him knawes."
("The world, he says, to him draws
And entices and loves those who know him.")

The Pricke has often been ascribed to Rolle; Miss Allen has disputed his authorship; and so far it has not been proved.

(14) The word is *lyght,* which in the Psalter, Rolle uses as an adverb for "easily."

(15.) Egges. This word and its derivatives occur often in Rolle's *Psalter,* specially in the *Commentary:* e.g. vii. 5: "the devil, that is enemy to all mankind follows my soul, egging on to sin"; xiii. 1: "but the delight of sin eggs on erring men to ween God not to be"; xxxiv. 6: "lightly be they driven into such temptation and soon assent to all egging on."

(16) Skyll: a word, with its derivatives, (specially skilwise, skilwisely), which Rolle uses constantly.

(17) The use of this verse thus, Psalm lxxii. 5, is in accord with Rolle's exegesis in his *Psalter Commentary:*—"They" (i.e. the wicked) "are not in travail with good men that do penance for their sin: but they delight them in their vanity, travailing not for endless joy: for with men whom God draws to heaven they shall not be swinged, but with fiends in hell."

(18) Stopping about, dawdling.

(19) i.e. think all round, thoroughly.

(20) Useless.

(21) The Arundel MS. here reads *wordes;* the Thornton *bourdis.* Bourdes from Old French behordeis means a tournament: Old French bourde means jest. The word occurs in Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Sinne* (c. 1303), and in *The Romance of William of Palerne* (c. 1350). As a verb, with the meaning to jest, it is to be found in *The Pricke of Conscience* (c. 1340). Here it is spelt, as Rolle is accustomed to spell, with the termination *is.*

(22) Cf. Thomas à Kempis: *Vellem me pluries tacuisse et inter homines non fuisse. Sed quare tam libentur loquimur et invicem fabulamur, cum tamen raro sine laesione conscientiae ad silentium redimus?*

(Imitatio l. X.)

(Oftentimes I could wish that I had held my peace; and that I had not been among men. But why do we so willingly speak and talk one with another, when notwithstanding we seldom return to silence without hurt of conscience?)

(23) Sufficiency.

(24) Manner of occupation.

(25) This paragraph has no parallel in the Arundel MS.

(26) Rob, strip.

(27) It is one of Rolle's characteristics to mix singular and plural together in the same sentence.

(28) A spiced drink.

(29) The word here is noblaye as also on pp. 32 and 33; MS.Arundel has noblay, not very common. It occurs in Rolle's *Psalter* cvii. 2., with the spelling noblay; not noblaie, as e.g. Chaucer uses it.

(30, 31) Two furs, constantly coupled by mediæval writers. Vair may have been parti-coloured, as the word is connected with "various." Gris was of course grey, possibly squirrel.

(32) Thusgate, i.e. in this way, just so. This word is not given in *Stratmann's Middle English Dictionary.* Mr. Roscoe Parker, in his edition of *The Life of S. Anne* (E.E.T.S., No. 174 Orig. Series, 1928), p. xv., in his list of special forms peculiar to the North, notes its occurrence four times in that poem.

(33) For "secondly."

(34) The verb here is spelt with *ay* for *u*, as Rolle spells it in the *Psalter,* and as it is spelt in *The Pricke of Conscience.*

(35) Tithes.

(36) This is repetition.

(37) Noghte-for-thi : one of Rolle's special words.

(38) i.e. the motives already named.

(39) Mag-pies.

(40) Here the Thornton MS. breaks off. Everywhere, in this book, for convenience, 'th' has been used instead of the equivalent Middle English character.

CHAPTER IV.

THE AUTHORSHIP OF "OUR DAILY WORK."

DOM NOETINGER has remarked that, in the past, it has been very difficult to criticise Rolle's work as a whole, on account of imperfect evidence as to what is his and what is not, and what, at best, is doubtful.

To a considerable extent, Miss Hope Allen has removed this difficulty, even though some of her conclusions are challenged. In her book, *Writings ascribed to Richard Rolle,* the fruit of some twenty years of work, she has attempted to establish a Canon: her arguments and facts and hypotheses necessarily fill many pages. The upshot is, that she includes the *Melum Contemplativorum* and the *Incendium Amoris,* both abounding in auto-biographical passages. Further, she accepts as genuine the *Comment on Canticles; Canticum Amoris; Judica me Deus;* all the Scripture Commentaries, including, of course, the *Psalter Version with Commentary; Contra Amatoris Mundi; Emendatio Vitae; Ego dormio; The Commandment of Love to God;* the *Regula Vivendi* (also known as *The Form of Perfect Living*). She also appears to accept one of the *Meditations on the Passion,* ascribed to him by other scholars.

Besides these, she admits the few poems usually thought to be his, and some fragments of prose. Her list of genuine works is somewhat shorter than Horstman's, who, if his estimate of Rolle's character is faulty, was, though with the disabilities of one breaking up an untilled field, sound philologically, as we mere mortals go. All taken together, this Rolle Canon makes a more substantial and vivid collection, more varied too, than any other fourteenth century mystic, so far as our present knowledge goes, can offer. It is

well to indicate this, for the constant tendency to chop and change, always characteristic of "Criticism" with a capital, is accentuated now-a-days by the desire to say some new thing. Because Rolle is beginning to have his due, he is recently suffering at the hands of those who require criticism to dispute.

There are perhaps only four of the Writings which Miss Hope has excluded, at any rate tentatively if not positively, which Rolle's lovers will decline to give up save on incontrovertible evidence that he cannot have written them. These are, *Our Daily Work; Meditation on the Passion and of Three Arrows on Doomsday*, and the two little tracts, *On Grace* and *On Prayer*. Of these, the first is devotionally of the greater importance, because few treatises of its precise nature have been written.

Just because he was, as has already been shown, an ascetic as well as a mystic, it is of great moment to settle, so far as possible, the authorship of those writings which Miss Allen regards as dubious, or certainly not his, and it is at least equally important for the sake of the whole religious experience possible for men and women, both "in religion" and "in the world."

This question of authorship may not, save on the general grounds of historic accuracy, seem much to matter to the student of philology, or of literature *quâ* literature: but it is of vital import to those to whom Rolle is, first and foremost, a religious teacher.

That he wrote *The Form of Perfect Living* for a Religious, his friend Margaret Kirkby, we know. But the singular interest of *Our Daily Work* is that it deals with the duties and trials of "active" life in the world, whereas so many spiritual manuals are intended for religious, some for contemplatives as such: in which case, if "actives" are not actually warned off altogether, they soon find that they need no reminder that the case does not nicely fit them. Because Rolle was a mystic and an ascetic, because as he himself said, though he was not a bishop, not a prelate, yet he was

" solicitous for the Church of God," it was natural that he should compose the *Regula,* for Margaret; and, at her request, translate for her, with a Commentary, the *Psalter,* the Church's great book of meditation and devotion, always, everywhere. Equally, because he was an ascetic, and because in his wanderings through the rough North Riding of his day, he had learned practically

> " How hard it is to be a Christian,
> Hard for you and me,"

infinitely hard, just then and there for those either compelled to stay in the world, or at any rate not definitely called to flee from it, but to serve God, as they best could, in that rude, reckless *milieu* of which we get so lively a picture in the *North Riding Records,* it was natural that having written for a religious, he should then write for men and women of " active life " this little tract on *Our Daily Work:*—pitched not on the rare, high note of mystical thought and vision which sometimes scares plain people, but tuned to a note of genuine understanding of every-day commonplace difficulty present to people with obvious limitations but with genuine aspirations; and lit here and there with just that homely fervour which appeals to ordinary folk in drab ways.

Just because Horstman, a pioneer researcher in English fourteenth century literature, and because some more recent writers with less excuse, have overemphasised Rolle's " sensibility," or emotionalism, it is all the more important to collect the evidence and probabilities for his authorship of this little work, which is a practical book, full of common-sense and diurnal experience.

Rolle, we know, tramped the Yorkshire moors and dales, seeking his fellows of all classes and of none. He sat, seemingly with equal ease, in castles and alehouses; his purpose being always the same—to win souls. We know no other mystic of his time who did

that. How likely, then, that he should care to leave behind him a *vade-mecum* for the multitude.

If Miss Allen could produce evidence that someone else wrote this Guide, or even plain proof that Rolle did not, all pleading of probability would, of course, be futile. This she does not do. Let us see, then, if it is not, not only possible, but likely that this lover of all and sundry souls wrote a little hand-book to aid the common person.

But first it should be said that though *Our Daily Work* is devotionally of the greater importance to all who regard Rolle as the pioneer in English of mystical and ascetical writing, yet the other three, accounted by Miss Allen as doubtful, are not unimportant.

Horstman, in his edition of Rolle,[1] mentions some treatises, and then writes:

> "the rest can safely be ascribed to Richard Rolle; so certainly No. 10,[2] which is written in his best style, in his peculiar rhythmical prose."

To this, Miss Allen replies:

> "Horstmann prints the work from two manuscripts, in both of which occur genuine works of Rolle: neither ascribed the *Meditation* to him;[3] and in general there seems no reason to do so. It is more colourless than the *Meditation* which bears his name, in spite of Horstmann's dictum that 'it is written in his best style, in his peculiar rhythmical prose.' The rhythmical prose is not more pronounced than is found in many books of the time. *(Vide supra,* pp. 78—89.)"[4]

When the reader turns to pp. 78—89, he finds Miss Allen saying that

> "the qualities of poetical prose which Rolle de-

[1] Vol. I., p. 104.

[2] *The Meditation on the Passion and of the Three Arrows on Doomsday.*

[3] A fact Horstman carefully noted.

[4] *Writings ascribed to Richard Rolle*, by Hope Emily Allen, p. 286.

> veloped to the point of extravagance will be found now and then incidentally in the patristic writers whom we know that he read."

She then refers specially to S. Gregory's *Moralia,* to *Meditations and Prayers* ascribed to S. Anselm, and to the works of the Victorines. But her argument is vitiated first by the fact that, in Rolle, poetical prose is not "incidental," but perpetual; and secondly by a suppressed premise that Latin and English poetical prose have no important difference of savour, of individuality. We all know that writers of poetical prose, belonging to the same race, can differ radically from each other, and exhibit a great variety of dissimilar qualities; even more then, do men of different nations show significant differences. Moreover, Horstman did not speak only of rhythmical prose, but of "peculiar rhythmical prose." Anyone with quick taste and a natural ear for sound will admit his claim for Rolle's "peculiarity."

Miss Allen still more surprisingly, on p. 80, tries to demolish Rolle's authorship by references to *The Ancren Riwle* and *The Cloud of Unknowing,* two works as unlike each other in the matter of style as both are unlike Rolle's undoubted writings. Once more, on the same page, she misses Horstman's point, which was not that Rolle was alone in writing musical prose, but that his style had a peculiar, characteristic quality. Writing about a piece in the *Vernon MS.* called *Talking of the Love of God,* and about other alliterative literature, she said:

> "These pieces probably had a continuous circulation, and they will serve to remind us of the rashness of Horstmann's[5] conclusion[6] that poetical prose can be used as a criterion of Rolle's workmanship."

Horstman, rash or not, tested writings by a peculiar music which he, and later students, greatly indebted to

[5] Miss Allen spells Horstman's name always with a double n.
[6] *Op. cit.,* p. 80.

his philological labours, believe that they hear in those works which are, beyond reasonable doubt, Rolle's. When in these other unsigned, unguaranteed writings they find similar, even indistinguishable, rhythmical style, they regard it as part of the evidence available for establishing his authorship.

When Miss Allen dismisses *The Three Arrows* as "more colourless than the Meditations which bear his name," it is difficult to imagine what she wants in the sphere of colour. The following passage from *The Three Arrows* seems deeply hued enough:

> "This fire, as S. Austin says, burns so woodly[7] and ever alike that though all this world's waters all overflowed it, it might not sloken[8] this fire nor cool it a little. This fire aye makes smoke, that makes the wretches weep, and their tears strengthen the fire there, as oil would if it were cast in this fire here. . . . . When this woe-ful word, *Ite maledicti ebe* is said, the loathly devils shall gather the evil from the good, and as wood, lions draw them to hell, ever there to be in all the pains that may be thought on."

Miss Allen says that "the sections on *Grace, Prayer,* and *Daily Work,* suggest him more than the *Meditation"* (i.e. *The Three Arrows)* "though there is nothing in the latter that makes his authorship impossible."[9]

In the Thornton MS. in the Library of Lincoln there is no break whatever between the treatise on *Grace* and that on *Daily Work.* How probable, then, that both are by the same author: thereby, with the *Regula,* making Rolle that most unusual person, one who wrote detailed counsels for "religious" and for those "in the world." Moreover, would Robert Thornton, the man who copied them, be likely to run one man's work into another's? Against the least likely of the four, as

[7] Madly, mad.
[8] Quench.
[9] *Op. cit.,* p. 287.

she considers, *The Three Arrows,* she brings no certain evidence: nothing, she admits, makes his authorship even of that "impossible." Concerning *Our Daily Work,* she says its attribution to Rolle "rests on an unfounded conjecture of Horstmann's."[10] "Conjecture" is a vague word for his definite plea from style: and "unfounded" seems far too strong. She may not agree with Horstman's "tests"; but that does not make them lack foundation. Her own one argument is a single passage in the Ingilby MS., which is wanting in the MS. Thornton. It is best to quote her statement intact:

> "It is possible that scraps of lost works of his have been drawn on; the sections on *Grace, Prayer* and *Daily Work* suggest him more than the *Meditation,* though there is nothing in the latter that makes his authorship impossible. In spite of the reminiscences of his style in the section on *Daily Work,* however, the following would probably make his authorship impossible:[11]
>
> > 'God, when He comes to His lovers, He gives them to taste how sweet He is: and ere they may fully feel, He from them wends, and as an Eagle He spreads His wings and above them rises, as if He said, Some part ye may feel how sweet I am: but if ye will feel this sweetness to the full, fly up after Me where I am sitting on My Father's right hand, and then shall ye be full filled in joy of Me. God comes to His lovers to comfort them: He parts from them that they should the more meek themselves, and that they should not overmuch pride themselves of the gladding they have for His coming. For if

[10] *Op. cit.,* p. 368.

[11] Miss Allen, of course, quotes the passage in Middle English. I have, for convenience sake, translated it.

> thy Spouse were aye with thee, thou would'st impute[12] it to nature and not to grace.'
>
> As we have seen (*supra* pp. 70, sq.), Richard Rolle declared that mystic joy was perpetual, though most mystical writers felt it to be intermittent. The passage quoted shews therefore an essential divergence from his experience. It will also have shewn the superior style of the piece, which would suggest that it was written by one of the leaders among fourteenth century mystics."[13]

This closing paragraph contains three sentences, each one a statement to be challenged. The first and most important concerns Rolle's alleged divergence from the general mystical tradition, that mystic experience is intermittent. Is Miss Allen justified in this allegation? Surely not. At the very utmost, is it more than a question of degree? Her chief references are to his *Commentary on Canticles,* and to Bk. I. ch. xv.[14] of the *Incendium Amoris.* As this latter is far the more accessible, it may be most profitable to deal with that. Here, then, are some passages from this famous chapter:

> " Unde ab inicio mutati animi usque ad supremum amoris Christi gradum, quem ego attingere Deo dante ualebam, in quo gradu cum canoro iubilo diuinas laudes personarem: quattuor annos et circa tres menses habui. Hic nempe cum prioribus ad ipsum dispositiuis status permanet[15] usque

[12] The word used for impute is *rete,* which does not occur in the revised edition (1891) of Stratmann's *Middle English Dictionary. Aretten* does. But in Rolle's *Psalter,* a form of this uncommon word occurs: Ps. xxxi. 2;

" Blisful man til whaim lord retted not synn."

i.e. Blessed man to whom the Lord imputes not sin. Moreover, the phrase " the more meek themselves " recalls Rolle's constant use of the verb to meek one's self in his *Psalter Commentary.*

[13] *Writings ascribed to Richard Rolle,* p. 287.

[14] She refers to Miss Deanesly's edition: pp. 187—191.

[15] Miss Deanesly notes that the Short Texts read " pertinent."

in finem. Uerum eciam post mortem erit perfeccior, quia hic gaudium amoris, incendiumue caritatis incipitur, et in celesti reguo gloriosissimam accipiet consummacionem. Et quidem in hac uita in hiis gradibus constitutus, non modicum proficit sed in alium statum non ascendit, immo quasi in gracia confirmatus ut mortalis potest quiescit." *(Op. cit.* p. 190.)

This passage Miss Comper renders :—

"Wherefore from the beginning of my changed soul, unto the high degree of Christ's love, the which, God granting, I was able to attain—in which degree I might sing God's praises with joyful song—I was four years and about three months. Here forsooth, with the first disposition of love gathered into this degree, she bides to the very end, and also, after death she shall be more perfect, because here the joy of love or burning of charity is begun, and in the heavenly kingdom it shall receive its most glorious ending. And forsooth she profits not a little, set in these degrees, in this life, but she ascends not into another degree; but, as it were confirmed in grace, as far as mortal man can, she rests." *(The Fire of Love,* p. 72.)

What does the phrase, *ut mortalis potest quiescit* (as far as mortal man can, she rests) really signify, if Rolle intended to teach the unbroken perpetuity of ecstasy, here and now in this world? Here is another passage, from chapter 15, on which Miss Deanesly remarks—"Rolle is still apparently referring to himself" :[16]

"Agam assidue gracias cum gaudio, quia conformem me fecisti canentibus preclare per claritatem consciencie, in anima ardente eterno amore, dum amat et estuat incendio sedente, mente mutata, calore autem calente desiderio vehementer dilatato. Et uera uenustas amabilis uirtutis uiget

[16] *Op. cit.*, p. 191, footnote.

sine uicio in conspectu Creatoris, sic iubilus se ingerens, cum canore iocundo letificat languentem et releuat labores."[17]

Miss Comper translates as follows:

"Continually with joy shall I give thanks because He has made my soul in clearness of conscience like to singers clearly burning in endless love; and while she loves and seethes in burning, the changed mind, resting and being warmed by heat, and greatly enlarged by desire and the true beauty of lovely virtue, without vice or strife in the sight of our Maker; and thus bearing praise within herself, gladdens the longer with merry song and refreshes labour." (*Op. cit.* pp. 72, 73.)

"Gladdens the longer!" But, if ecstasy were perpetual, why "the longer" and not all the time? It seems impossible by any stretching to make the above passages cover perpetuity of ecstasy. Other passages in the *Incendium* are at least as clearly against Miss Allen's plea. There are two, in chapter xiii., of which the first might be called the Hermit's Way:

"Recte itaque heremite singulare propositum habent, in caritate Dei et proximi uiunt, laudem temporalem despiciunt, uisus hominum pro posse fugiunt, omnes digniores se putant, continue deuocioni mentes suas prebent, ocium odiunt, uoluptalibus carnalibus uiriliter resistunt, celescia sapiunt et ardenter querunt, terrena non cupiunt sed dereliquunt, suauitate oracionum delectantur. Uerum quidam eorum eterne refeccionis dulcedinem senciunt, immo et casti corde et corpore, intemerato mentis oculo, celestes ciues et Deum speculantur."[18]

Miss Comper, whose rendering is from Misyn's Middle English, checked by the Latin, renders this thus:

[17] *Op. cit.*, pp. 190—191.
[18] *Op. cit.*, p. 180.

"The righteous hermits have also a single purpose. They live in the charity of God and of their neighbour; they despise worldly praise; as mickle as they can they flee man's sight; they hold ilk man more worthy than themselves; they continually give their minds to devotion; they hate idleness; they manly gainstand fleshly lusts; they savour and burningly seek heavenly; earthly they covet not but forsake; in sweetness of prayer they are delighted. Truly some of them feel the sweetness of eternal refreshment; and with chaste heart and body, with the undefiled eye of the mind, truly behold God and the citizens of heaven." *(Op. cit.* pp. 60, 61.*)*

Surely it is plain that "eternal" in the closing sentence refers to the heavenly state: Rolle, by using it, did not mean to suggest that men in this present life feel this blessedness all the time. That this is the right view of his meaning seems to be proved by another passage in chapter xiii.:

"Perfectus enim solitarius in diuino amore uehementer ardet, et dum supra se in excessum mentis per contemplacionem rapitur, usque ad canorum iubilum et sonum celicum gaudens subleuatur."[19]

And Miss Comper translates it:

"For the perfect lonely man hugely burns in God's love; and whiles in surpassing of mind he is rapt above himself by contemplation, he is lift up joying into that sweet sound and heavenly noise." *(Op. cit.* p. 62.*)*

This passage, by the use of *dum* (whiles) clearly states the coming and going of ecstasy. The following extract from chapter xxvi. of the *Incendium* may surely close the matter:

"enim amore langueo, quia quem diligo in suo decore cernere tota mente concupisco. Interim autem in labore et certamine peregrinacionis mee

[19] *Op. cit.*, p. 182.

> sui amoris dulcedine me uisitet, et ad ipsum cor meum transferendo affectuum superiorum calore delectet, ac donec dilectum clare uidere potero, eius nomen dulcissimum in mente mea retentum canens cogitabo."[20]
>
> "Therefore, for love I long, because whom I love with all my mind, I desire to see in His fairness. In the meanwhile, truly, in the labour and strife of my pilgrimage, I beseech He make glad with sweetness of His love: and unto the time I can clearly see my Beloved, I shall think of His full sweet Name, holding it, joying in my mind." *(Op. cit.* p. 109.)

It is hardly possible to argue that the closing words refer to the difference between mystical union here and the Beatific Vision, because of the words about pilgrimage. If anyone will maintain that Rolle contradicts himself, or that he leaves his meaning obscure, we may well remember that, of our fourteenth century mystics, he wrote first, that he cleared the way and showed it. Moreover, in his time, critical scholarship, as we know it, did not exist: our literature was undeveloped, and the saints did not write like academic research students. It is tedious to pile passage on passage: but this idea of perpetual ecstasy is no better supported by some other of his writings.

The Form of Perfect Living is not only admittedly genuine, but if not the latest, is one of his latest writings. Miss Allen (p. 273) suggests 1348. Rolle made his purpose clear in the last paragraph:

> "Lo! Margaret, I have told thee shortly the Form of Living, and how thou mayst come to perfection."[21]

[20] *Op. cit.*, p. 216.

[21] The *Form* was written in Middle English: three Northern MSS., and many Southern copies remain. The translations here are from ch. xii., of the MS. Rawl, printed by Horstman on pp. 46 et seq.

To write thus, for a religious, involved a comparison of the Active and Contemplative lives :

> " Two lives there are that Christian men may live. One is called Active life, for it is more in bodily work. Another, Contemplative life, for it is more in ghostly sweetness. Active life is greatly outward, and in more travail and in more peril, because of the temptations that are in the world. Contemplative life is largely inward, therefore it is more enduring and more certain, rest fuller, more delectable, lovelier and more rewarding. For it has joy in God's love, and savour in the life that lasts aye, in this present time, if it be rightly led. And that feeling of joy in the love of Jesus passes all other merits in earth. For it is so hard to come to, because of the frailty of our flesh, and the many temptations we are beset with, which hinder us night and day : all other things that come are light in regard thereof ; for that may no man deserve, but only it is given of God's goodness to them who verily give themselves to contemplation and to quiet for Christ's love."

This passage, and the rest of the chapter, harmonise with traditional teaching, and offer no support to Miss Allen's contention that " Richard Rolle declared that mystical joy was perpetual."

Having described the "lower part" of Contemplative life, viz., that concerned with " meditation of holy writing " ; " good thoughts and sweet . . . . of the grace of God . . . . praising God in psalms and hymns and prayers " ; and then, the " higher part," which he says is " beholding and yearning after the things of heaven," he passes on to describe ecstasy proper. Rolle does not analyse the way of contemplation with the minuteness, say, of Richard of S. Victor, in the twelfth century, who claimed that there are six steps in it. But substantially their experience was alike. Rolle says :

> " A man or woman that is appointed to contemplative life, first God inspires them to forsake

this world, and all the vanity and covetousness and vile lust thereof. Afterwards, He leads them by their lone and speaks to their heart, and as the prophet says, 'He gives them to suck of the beginning of the sweetness of love.' And then He sets them in the will to give themselves wholly to prayers and meditations and tears. Afterwards, when they have suffered many temptations, and when the foul annoyances of thoughts that are idle, and of vanities which will encumber those who cannot destroy them, are passing away, He makes them gather up their heart to them, and fasten it only in Him, and opens to the eye of their soul the gates of heaven: and then the fire of love verily lies in their heart, and burns therein and makes it clean from all earthly filth, and afterwards they are contemplative men, and ravished in love. For contemplation is a sight and they see into heaven with their ghostly eye. But thou shalt wit that no man has perfect sight of heaven, whilst they are living bodily here. But as soon as they die they are brought before God, and see Him face to face and eye to eye, and dwell with Him without end. For Him they sought, and Him they coveted, and Him they loved with all their might."

Can anyone avoid seeing the clear difference implied here, all through the passage and specially in the last sentence, between the struggling effort and the transient gleams vouchsafed—quite apart, as S. Teresa so often says, from human will and power—by God to the contemplative in this world, and abiding mystical union to be had at will? Is there anything in this passage so inharmonious with the one in *Our Daily Work* challenged by Miss Allen, as to make Rolle's authorship of the latter "probably . . . . impossible"?

It is neither impossible nor even improbable that Rolle should use the eagle as a symbol for God. The heavenly wings were an image dear to him. In Psalm

lx. 4, where to S. Augustine—taken so often by Rolle as his guide in exposition of the Psalter—the "dweller in the tabernacle" was the Church at large (though he did not forget the individual), the "dweller" is, to Rolle, not only an individual, but himself, sheltered by the wings: "I shall be covered against the heat of vices, in the covering of Thy wings; that is of Thy mercy and Thy might that weigh not, and turn away hurting."

In Psalm lxii. 8, using the Psalmist's image, Rolle rejoices in his safety: "In the covering of Thy wings I shall joy . . . for I am Thy bird, and if Thou cover me not, the glede will ravish me. . . . Thy right Hand, that is Thy mercy uptook me for to cover me with Thy wings."

Here, however, he passes by S. Augustine's beautiful elaboration of the thought:

> "Little ones we are: therefore may God protect us under the shadow of His wings. What, when we shall have grown greater? A good thing it is for us that even then He should protect us, so that under Him, the greater, always we be chickens."

Preying birds, and parents covering their chicks are common enough on the North Riding Moors; Rolle must many a time have watched them. At others he might see an eagle soaring, symbol of the soul's flight, till lost in the far blue. To one, this passage may seem "probably impossible" for him to have written; but to another, likely and most characteristic.

Then there is Miss Allen's second sentence, in the passage already quoted:

> "The passage quoted[22] shows therefore, an essential divergence from his experience."

Since she stressed this passage in her effort to disprove his authorship, it seems odd that she should have

[22] The passage beginning, "God, when He comes to His lovers," etc. See above, p. 76.

missed or ignored the sentence that immediately precedes it: viz.:

> "Happy are they that thus mourn and languish to God; for they shall never separate from God, but have Him aye at their will."

If this is Rolle's work, here is one of the most definite indications he ever gave that, at times, he thought of the possible perpetuity of ecstasy. The fact may be that, like the rest of us, and rather more than some of us, Rolle was not wholly self-consistent. The major part of his teaching about ecstasy accords with tradition, that men and women cannot in this life experience it at will. Now and then, in his impetuous fervour he appears to say a little more than he would have admitted "in a cool hour."

Miss Allen's last plea is still more surprising:

> "It will also have shown the superior style of the piece, which would suggest that it was written by one of the leaders among fourteenth century mystics."

Where, precisely, is the superiority of this challenged passage? And further, who is a leader among fourteenth century mystics if Rolle is not? Who surpasses him in style, in those early days when he was using the vernacular as a literary instrument before Hilton and the rest were old enough to write?

Psalm ciii., in the *Metrical Psalter*, is an example of the musical quality to which his lyrical art could rise. The famous passage in the *Enconium Nominis Jesu*, beginning "I ran about by covetousness of riches" is a notable example of the beauty and vivid force of mediæval English prose.

In the rendering, already given, of *Our Daily Work*, instances, not a few, are noted where words characteristic of Rolle occur: all these "accumulate probabilities," to use Cardinal Newman's phrase, that the little Treatise is really his. Then, there is a picturesque passage, not a mere word or phrase, but an

image in *Our Daily Work,* which, modernised as to spelling, runs thus :

> " If thou givest a great lord drink in a slutty cup, were the drink ne'er so good he would loath[23] it : and bid do it away, thirst he never so sore : so God does with a prayer that comes from a foul mouth."

In *The Commandment of Love to God,* admittedly Rolle's,[24] the same image is used though in a different connection :

> " And no wise man does (put) precious liquor in a stinking vessel, but in a clean. . . . Naught-for-that, a foul vessel may be made so clean that a full dear thing safely may be put therein."

Until evidence much stronger than any adduced by Miss Allen can be brought against Rolle's authorship of *Our Daily Work,* a student may reasonably, specially considering what can be said on the positive side, accept Horstman's view that it " can safely be ascribed to R. Rolle."

[23] *Wlat;* certainly one of Rolle's words.

[24] " *The Commandment* shows unmistakable evidence of Rolle's authorship." (*Writings ascribed to Richard Rolle.* H. E. Allen, p. 253.)

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